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The Editors
PUTTING OUR FAITH
IN FIRE POWER

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JANUARY 14, 1983

John Garvey
THE BISHOPS & THEIR CRITICS

Randall Fegley
THE PLIGHT OF AFRICA'S COPTS

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GANDHI AS ARMY RECRUITER

MICHAEL NOVAK
and his ultrasuper democraticapitalism

The man who raised amnesia to a theological principle

PETER STEINFELS

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Correspondence

Often poetic

Great Neck, N.Y.

To the Editors: Thank you for the excellent essay by Anne Brennan, "The Creationism Controversy: the Religious Issues" [Oct. 22]. It is written with such a welcome lack of pedantry and special jargon usually found in the field. In fact, Anne Brennan's use of metaphors is not only illuminating to the subject, but often poetic.

ZOÉ LANTELME BELTH

Fact & theory

Fredericksburg, Va.

To the Editors: It is encouraging to see that there is a growing awareness that there is extremism on both sides of the creationist-evolutionist controversy. Anne Brennan [Oct. 22] does a beautiful job of seeking a balance between these opposing groups with her dual-lens approach. However, the status of the theory of evolution is not nearly as exalted as evolutionists have led her to believe.

"The scientific academy" is by no means "unanimous in its acceptance of the theory of evolution." Prominent evolutionists have expressed their dismay that physical scientists, like myself, are especially loath to accept it. Even many competent biological scientists find fault with it.

To clarify her statement that "the theory of evolution" is supported by "an overwhelming body of confirming evidence," it is necessary to distinguish between evolution as fact and evolution as theory. The fossil record clearly shows that evolution is an important part of the picture. That is a fact which nearly all accept. The theory of evolution would make it the whole story. That is where we balk. This theory is definitely second-rate because: (1) since it is unfalsifiable it cannot claim to be truly scientific; (2) it cannot explain all the evidence, like how mammals could have evolved from reptiles, and (3) it suffers from an embarrassing lack of evidence about missing links.

On the other hand, creation is as much of a fact as evolution is, but like evolution, it too is not the whole story as creationists would have us believe.

Between the complementary facts of creation and evolution, there can be no argument. Both are necessary to make sense out of the data. The quarrel is between creationism and evolutionism, as the theory of evolution has been called. They are both ideologies. A plague on both their houses. The important thing is that students, and the public in general, are given a balanced perspective. Right now, they are not getting one.

EDWARD C. FREILING

Circumstantial evidence

Notre Dame, Ind.

To the Editors: In "The Creationism Controversy: the Social Stakes" [Oct. 22] Francis Flaherty made a very valid point about the threat evolution teaching poses to the free exercise of their religion by the children of religious fundamentalists. Even if teachers cannot teach creation science because there isn't any, they must, at the appropriate times and places, point out that using a scientific theory as a form of detective work to reconstruct the past makes it subject to all the limitations of detective work based on circumstantial evidence.

Evolution tries to reconstruct past events which could strictly be called facts only if we had eye-witness accounts of them. Most scientific theories are used by scientists to explain observed facts and to predict future, not-yet-observed facts. Their survival as theories depends on their ability to predict the outcome of natural or man-made experiments. But evolution is a peculiar theory in that it attempts to *substitute* for observation, to state as facts a series of past events which could not be observed by any human observer. A fossil is a present fact, but it is only circumstantial evidence for the fact of how it came to be.

For me, the circumstantial evidence, in the absence of anything to the contrary, is totally convincing that the fossil record came to be what it is by a process of evolution. But a religion which believes it has eye-witness (divine witness) accounts to the contrary, is entitled to discount the circumstantial evidence, *without being labeled unscientific*. We have too many examples from the history of crime detection of how circumstantial evidence, even from a crime lab., has led to false reconstructions of past fact. Confusing theory with fact, and believing that theory can substitute for fact, is what should be labeled unscientific, yet it is an occupational hazard for us scientists, and has been a major obstacle to scientific progress.

Most mainline Christian religionists do not feel threatened by the teaching of evolution, and do not empathize with fundamentalist Christian parents. But the main reason they don't feel threatened is that they haven't yet realized how evolution turns the whole idea of Fall and Redemption literally upside down from its traditional position, as I pointed out in these pages, Aug. 15, 1975. I hope we leave it upside down, but many others may not, and they may begin to see that it is more than the literal interpretation of creation which is threatened by evolution.

JULIAN R. PLEASANTS
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Commonweal welcomes letters on subjects treated in its pages. Letters of not more than 250 or 300 words naturally have a better chance of being published.

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FAITH IN FIRE POWER

AMBASSADORS DON'T HAVE it easy these days. There on the front pages, December 21, was Nicaraguan Ambassador to Washington Francisco Fiallos Navarro lamenting that his country was being threatened by a "leftist dictatorship." He had just been removed from his post for expressing similar worries in an interview for Managua's *La Prensa*, an interview the government would not allow published. The ambassador's concerns are ones we share, and ones we wish were taken more seriously by Nicaragua's enthusiastic supporters here.

But such an interview is not the sort of thing an emissary does if he wants to keep his portfolio. Robert E. White learned as much when he questioned the direction of Washington's thinking about El Salvador. And last November White's successor as ambassador to El Salvador must have felt the ground shake a bit beneath his feet when he warned a group of top military officials and businessmen that the U.S. might suspend military aid if the local human rights situation didn't improve. It would seem that Ambassador Deane R. Hinton's patience, like White's a few years earlier, was wearing to a bluntness he had previously only expressed in private. The "mafia of the right," said Mr. Hinton, must be stopped; "the gorillas of this mafia," no less than the guerrillas in the mountains, "are destroying El Salvador." Still.

That was not the kind of news Washington, eager to recertify war-weary Salvador at the end of this month, wanted to hear — that is, wanted the U.S. Congress to hear. Foggy Bottom responded with embarrassed silence; then Mr. Reagan's early December trip smiled over the roughage — and, reaching for a new height of conflicting signals, embraced Guatemala's brutally efficient General Efrain Rios Montt. Did you get that, Mr. D'Aubisson? Full throttle ahead! — and that ain't land-reform.

Not only would El Salvador get its body-count certification, but Guatemala would get all those helicopter parts — which it's getting anyway — and more, to massacre Indian women and children. And the worst-kept secret war against Sandinistas in Nicaragua will apparently continue — despite explicit orders from the U.S. Congress, and despite the warning from internal critics of the Sandinistas like Ambassador Navarro that supporting Somozists is wrong-headed. Belying George Shultz's softer rhetoric, the fact is that U.S. policy toward Central America is in charge of old Cambodia hands like Thomas O. Enders and our ambassador to Honduras, John D. Negroponte — who aim to make a point they failed to prove in Southeast Asia: fire power wins.

As — even without major military aid from us — it's been winning, if you do not blink the cost in human life, in Guatemala. The "twice-born" General Rios Montt has proved, in a short time, far more effective than his predecessor, Romeo Lucas Garcia, in stopping the insurgent advance. Indian villages supporting the rebels are

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targeted. Wearing civilian dress, soldiers then raid the area, indiscriminantly slaughtering men, women, and children, some five or six thousand since July. With unmatched cynicism, the government then moves in with medical aid and food for the survivors, the men being organized into "civil patrols" under threat of execution on the spot. It's a persuasive method, and the Indians, choosing survival over suicide, have measurably withdrawn support from the guerrillas. (One wonders if this heightened productivity, so admired by Reaganites, is in part the result of the counterinsurgency tactics being taught at Guatemala City's military school by U.S. Green Beret, Captain Jesse Garcia.) There are now 500,000 refugees in Guatemala.

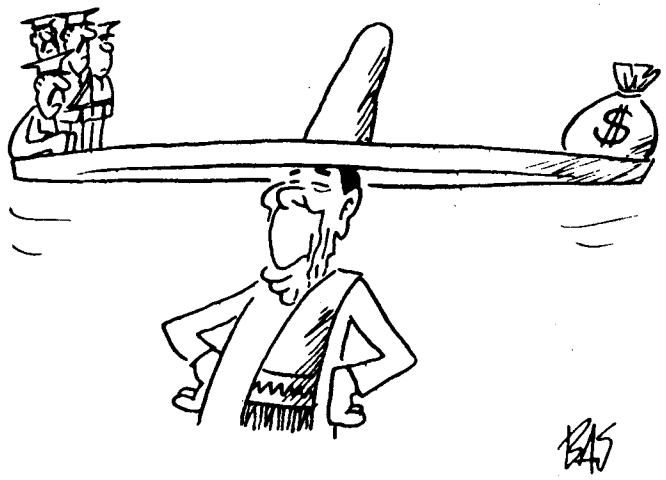
A "bad rap"? Does Guatemala need American aid for its "scorched Communist" policy? The London *Economist*, which so far has supported Mr. Reagan's hard-line strategy in Central America, argues that Rios Montt only needs it in order to gain international moral credit. If Congress goes along with Mr. Reagan's affable largess, it will be adding credence to the Marxist cartoon of U.S. "morality." We're siding with the "gorillas."

Which doesn't mean the guerrillas are necessarily nice people. Yet we ought to ask ourselves whom we are fighting in Central America. The Sandinistas surely, who with the exception of Costa Rica and despite their one-party tendencies, still have the best human rights record in the region. Our "secret war" feeds the militarists and totalitarians among them. As for the insurgents in El Salvador and Guatemala, we hardly know who they are. Probably more extreme than the Sandinistas. Yet on the political fronts of both sets of rebels sit the remnants of the moderate Christian Democrat parties of both countries. And among the rebels themselves there are certainly many who fight as much under the banner of Aquinas's justification of rebellion against tyranny as under the Marxist flag. Further, presuming Russia's unwillingness to float the economies of Guatemala, Nicaragua, and El Salvador — which is a safe bet — there are almost insuperable economic pressures which demand that any socialist-leaning states in the area would have to accommodate themselves to their superpower northern neighbor.

All of which is an argument for negotiation and political solutions to the inevitable social revolution which, as in Eastern Europe, fire power can only repeatedly repress, never permanently extinguish. The Carter human rights foreign policy was a beginning for the U.S. in coming to terms with a world-wide eruption of basic human claims. Mr. Reagan has set us against this tide, and by means which instruct our adversaries that brute force wins the day. The Athenians once thought so too.

DEBTOR'S PRISON

Americans will do anything for Latin America, one journalistic pundit said, except read about it. According to traditional wisdom, the mere mention of Latin American problems is enough to bring a quick glaze over the average reader's eyes.



This may not be as true as it once was, given the drama of actual combat in places like El Salvador, but it probably still remains true when it comes to discussions of Latin America's underlying plight—a plight that ultimately provides much of the explanation for the violence that sometimes shows up on the television evening news.

Take the current Latin American debt problem. The red ink in the accounts of Latin American countries inscribed on the books of banks in the United States and Europe now totals more than $240 billion. That's right, billion. Mexico's current inability to keep up with its $80 billion foreign debt is a striking warning of what could be a widespread international economic crisis. In sum, the Latin American countries have more than tripled their foreign debts in the past six years, and the region's indebtedness now represents well over half the foreign debt outstanding in the world. The largest part of this money is due not to governments but to private investors, and U.S. banks alone have more than $61 billion at stake. Only your corner banker can tell you just how many such loans he is carrying on his books, and the effect on the American economy of a possible widespread default does not bear thinking about. Mexico leads the debtors' pack, but Brazil owes only slightly less than Mexico's $80 billion, and Argentina is next in line with almost $40 billion in foreign debts outstanding. Smaller Latin American countries have burdens just as crushing, given the lesser size of their economies.

Foreign debts are different from internal governmental budget deficits. Foreign debts represent borrowing abroad by the government and by private investors. One catch to this kind of borrowing is that such loans are received in foreign currency such as dollars; this means that the interest must be paid largely by earnings from trade, tourism, and foreign investments in the borrowing country. Given the worldwide economic recession with its fall-off in all these money-making items, foreign debts have emerged during the past year as a hot domestic political issue in almost every Latin American country, making many already volatile political situations potentially explosive.

Why did this happen all of a sudden? Essentially the big

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change was the huge increase in the price of oil in 1974. Before that Latin American countries were not rich but they were surviving. They managed to stay reasonably solvent, depending on bilateral aid from the U.S. and private investment to expand underdeveloped economies. But the terrible increase in the price of the oil they had to import meant either economic stagnation or heavy borrowing abroad for economic stimulus. Most nations chose the latter course, egged on by U.S. banks which were bulging with petrodollars from the oil-rich sheiks. Some of the loans were used for genuinely fruitful schemes; Brazil, for example, invested much of its borrowed money in facilities that will pay off in the long run in increased national productivity. Many other nations were not so wise, however, and neither the banks nor the U.S. government exercised proper supervision in this regard. Argentina, for one, spent an estimated $6 billion during the past five years on the planes, missiles, and other arms it used in the Falkland Islands war. Where was governmental or bank oversight when this kind of spending was going on?

Clearly, big trouble could be in the offing. Some economists and political leaders in Latin America are calling for the formation of a debtors' union among Latin American countries with heavy foreign debts. Such a union would use the very size of their outstanding loans—and the danger possible default involves for the international economy—to negotiate more equitable arrangements for trade and aid. This step would take some doing, and the Latin Americans may not be able to bring it off. What then? Optimists say that even without such a debtors' union, the United States may agree to vitally necessary changes it has long resisted in the rules of the game for international trade and aid. Why? For one good reason, they argue: your friendly neighborhood banker can easily write off your Visa Card account if necessary; it's a lot harder to write off a whopping $61 billion. According to their scenario, pure self-interest will save us, and save Latin America at least from the danger of immediate bankruptcy. No United States administration could tolerate the idea of a massive Latin American default and the consequent national and international financial panic, they say—at least no U.S. administration with good sense.

This prediction of at least a temporary fast bail-out seems to be borne out by recent events indicating that some sort of rescue operation is underway. The International Monetary Fund has asked commercial banks to lend Mexico up to $6.5 billion in fresh credits over the next thirteen months. The Argentine government has agreed to heavy spending cuts as a condition for obtaining $2 billion in loans from the I.M.F. — cuts that are sure to be unpopular at home and which may lead to severe political unrest inside Argentina. While on his Latin American trip, President Reagan pledged that the United States would provide $1.2 billion in emergency short-term loans to Brazil, and he appealed to lenders around the world to help Brazil and other debtor countries through their financial crisis. Clearly the decision has been made at the highest levels that the world's banking system cannot survive a Latin American financial collapse. But such band-aid rescue operations cannot conceal the fact that the growth rate of Latin American countries that reached almost 6 percent a year over the last decade has plunged to 1.6 percent this year and that trade deficits are still growing at an alarming rate. Latin American economies are responding to the sharp ups and downs of international trade, and until something is done to ease that problem, the prospects are for a Latin America mired deeper and deeper in debt. And for a world banking structure (your neighborhood banker included) that is gnawed by uncertainty. A genuine solution is not yet in sight.

ET CETERA

- *Orthography for '83*

There are two "r's" in Mitterrand,
But so inaccurate is our glance
That often Monsieur Mitterand
Is made the Prresident of Frrance.

No "c" is found in George P. Shultz,
But editors can't get it shtraight.
Each day we see the sad reshults
Afflict the Shecretary of Shtate.

- Last month, former GOP economics adviser Herbert Stein explained in the *Wall Street Journal* "How World War III Was Lost." Placing himself sometime in the future, Stein imagines an underarmed America bowing to Soviet threats. Defeat is finally signaled when Washington agrees to a UN resolution that authorizes Communist supervision of the world's press. As a result, Stein fantasizes, "The *Wall Street Journal* and *Commentary* magazine were closed."

We don't care — we're still against Communism.

Report from Canada

ECONOMIC 'EXHAUSTEES'
WORST SINCE THE THIRTIES

Montreal

THERE IS a new word in the Canadian vocabulary. The word is "exhaustees." There were always a few of them around, but this year their number has increased to the point where they are a statistically significant sector of the Canadian population. Exhaustees are human beings who have gone through the statutory fifty-one weeks on unemployment insurance without finding a job.

It is no news to anyone that the economy is in serious trouble. And while politicians and economists continue to debate about what might be done about it, the depression continues. The reigning Liberal party, which creeps on with a safe parliamentary majority, is famous here for ad hoc solu-

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tions to problems. These continue as the country learns to live with the worst depression since the 1930s.

Part of the problem, although not many people like to say it aloud, is that Canada's economy is so involved with that of the United States that very little can be done about it. Reaganomics brought unprecedented high interest rates. Under fire from the opposition, the government redefined the problem of interest rates as a technical problem in money management incumbent on the Bank of Canada, which continued the pattern established when the government accepted responsibility for it: to keep interest rates a couple of points above those in the United States. The reason is fairly simple. If Canadian rates are lower, the smart available money flows South across the border, resulting in a balance of payments problem and a weakening of the Canadian dollar, which is supposed to be floating but which has been maintained at about eighty cents U.S.

As elsewhere, high interest rates here resulted in an unprecedented number of bankruptcies and high unemployment. This in turn put a strain on the federal unemployment insurance (U.I.C.) and the exhaustees became a significant part of the Canadian population, even as the government continued to define inflation as the most serious problem faced by the economy. At this writing, interest rates have come down, although that is small consolation to bankrupt farmers and businessmen and to those homeowners who had to renegotiate mortgages at seventeen or eighteen percent, especially the unemployed. Unlike in the United States, interest payments on private homes are not deductible for federal income tax.

As in the United States, the fashionable prescriptions for combating inflation have taken their toll in unemployment. Combined with soft markets for a country which depends to a much greater extent on exports than does the United States, the results are catastrophic. Almost every day the morning news brings word of yet another mine, paper mill or manufacturing plant that has either closed down or made drastic cuts in the work force. At Stelco in Hamilton, Ontario, some five thousand men of a work force of fourteen thousand have been laid off. They average something like two hundred and ten dollars a week on U.I.C. plus forty dollars from a company plan — in all, about $200 US. For those of us who are old enough to remember the depression of the thirties, this makes a crucial difference, but for the economy as a whole, a twenty-five or thirty percent pay cut translates into a serious reduction in consumer demand. When, after fifty-one weeks on U.I.C., the unemployed are redefined as exhaustees and move into an already-overloaded welfare system, the economy itself becomes more and more exhausted.

While the U.S. Ambassador recently raised hackles here by suggesting that Canada spent too much on social services and not enough on defense, the government, already looking at a budget deficit of twenty-five billion dollars, has announced programs of "job creation" which apparently have as their goal not the creation of new permanent sources of employment, but simply of enough work for exhaustees to qualify them to go on U.I.C. again.

It is quite possible that this is the best we can do under the circumstances. This has been combined with a highly-publicized program for "six and five" — six percent wage increase this year, five percent next year — in the public sector, which has public service unions up in arms. On the whole, provincial public sectors have eagerly joined the feds. Quebec, for several months now, has been living with the possibility of massive illegal strikes in the public sector because of a threatened roll-back of some twenty percent, canceling in effect wage increases granted last year. Already schools in Quebec were closed and hospitals placed on an "emergency-only" basis by a one-day general strike in public services.

Meanwhile the Hon. Allan J. MacEachern, who as Finance Minister presided over several unpopular budgets in the crusade against inflation, has just finished presiding over the GATT meeting in Geneva, where almost everyone cried loudly about protectionism and the need for free trade as they maneuvered to maintain whatever forms of protection they had managed to work out within the framework of GATT agreements.

On the surface, life goes on almost as usual. The busses and Metro of Montreal are full of people going to work in the morning. Yet in early December Christmas advertising is notably lacking in its usual frenzy. As in 1981 a number of retailers, both large and small, are looking at Christmas inventories with mounting apprehension, although they do not face the astronomic interest rates of last year. The local CBC station is sponsoring a contest for the best homemade Christmas presents.

While we read in the papers of middle-class people in the queues for soup kitchens, it is still nothing like the thirties. We now have U.I.C. and more adequate welfare systems, although that of Montreal — and of almost every major city in the country — is groaning under a vastly-increased caseload. On the federal level, a number of new jobs have opened up in the U.I.C. to handle the overload.

Beneath the surface, the picture is worse. Some observers wonder whether many of the jobs that have been eliminated during the depression will ever be open again. Some may well be replaced by robots, others may be exported to the many free production zones in those parts of the Third World now called the Newly Industrialized Countries (NICs). The other day this writer was shown a pair of trousers by a shopkeeper on the

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Boulevard Saint Laurent in Montreal: "Made in Canada! You don't see that any more." The reason of course is that a great many jobs have already been exported as free production zones have been opened in the NICs. Unions continue to complain about cheap labor abroad. What is less publicized is that much of this involves transfer of production facilities by corporations from the established industrialized countries, to places where they can institute a labor discipline and wage rates that remind the historian of Manchester or Leeds about 1820. Arthur Selwyn Miller, in *The Modern Corporate State*, remarks that "Conglomerates, in some respects, represent a reversion to primitive capitalism." This is nowhere more obvious than in labor policy.

Thus while Canada's depression, unlike that of the thirties, is in a sense the direct result of anti-inflation policies in the United States, sharpened by the enthusiastic cooperation of the Canadian government, there are deep structural roots in the world economy that make matters worse. Some Canadian economic forecasters have recently said that the depression has "bottomed out," but that the effects of "recovery" on jobs lost will not be seen for three to five years. That, of course, is a short time compared to the thirties. It is long enough for the twelve percent of the Canadian work force who were unemployed and actively seeking employment (those who have given up are not counted) as of December 1982, as well as for the increasing number of small businessmen and farmers who went under during the past two years.

JORDAN BISHOP

(Jordan Bishop, presently on sabbatical, is a member of the faculty of the College of Cape Breton in Nova Scotia.)

Of several minds: *John Garvey*

THE BISHOPS & THE CRITICS

THE BISHOPS ARE MUCH MILDER THAN THEIR MASTER

THE SECOND DRAFT of the U.S. Catholic bishops' pastoral letter on nuclear arms has caused a lot of comment, much of it foolish and most of that (though not all) from the right. Several commentators noted an inconsistency: the current draft says that we may possess nuclear weapons only so long as we absolutely refuse to use them, the justification being that this possession is tolerable as a temporary state of affairs while we move towards complete disarmament, using our weapons as bargaining chips. The problem is obvious: if your enemy knows that you will absolutely refuse to use a weapon, what you have is no longer a weapon and is therefore useless even as a bargaining point. (The bishops may have a good political point here, even if it is not a morally impressive one. You may say that you would never think of using doomsday weapons, and you may mean it with all your heart, but as long as you have them your enemy doesn't know that for sure. So it is not quite right to say that what the bishops have called for amounts to unilateral disarmament. The moral problem is that one may not threaten what one does not intend to do — would there be circumstances acceptable to the bishops in which one could threaten abortion? Threats in this case are too risky: the stakes are too high, since the existence of the threat contributes to a hardening rather than a softening of the enemy's position. And it would be naive to think that we are so fully in control of ourselves that in the event of an attack we would not say, "What the hell," and hit them with everything we've got.)

The most stupid criticism the bishops received was the argument that they are not expert in these issues. Archbishop Bernardin properly pointed out that editorialists sound off every day on any number of issues, ranging from the finer points of economics to every area of foreign policy. Are they experts on all, or any, of them? Many of the bishops prepared themselves quite well, in their reading and consultations, and a few have probably brought a more searching intelligence to the question of the arms race than even our president possesses.

Those in political power play a kind of intellectual shell game with their critics. They claim that bishops, for example, are not experts; when experts — atomic physicists and physicians who know what the effect of nuclear war would be — disagree with them, they claim that the experts don't have the political information that they themselves possess; and when those who do have such information or know how to get it criticize them, as a number of arms controllers, retired CIA and military people have, they accuse them of being ideologically motivated, and so forth.

This dishonesty is the reason why such critics as Michael Novak of the American Enterprise Institute are naive at best when they claim that the bishops are leaving their clerical territory and invading a field best left to lay experts. Lay experts are at least as tainted by the source of their income as bishops are, maybe even more so. There would be a point to the argument if the bishops said that Catholics must, under pain of sin or excommunication, support a certain legislative course. But the bishops have not done that, here or in the parallel case of the debate surrounding abortion. In the latter case the bishops did support specific legislative courses — first a constitutional amendment, more recently the Hatch initiative — and while it could be argued that they would have been better advised simply to state their opposition to abortion and to affirm the Catholic teaching that abortion is wrong because it is the deliberate

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taking of human life, they did not in any case say that Catholics who disagreed with them about the implementation of this concern were out of line. As citizens as well as moral leaders the bishops have every right to indicate practical procedures, to support them in any way they like, and to urge others to do so.

I do not like the word "pacifist," but that is no doubt how I would be described, since I believe any killing of other human beings to be completely inconsistent with the Gospel I try, badly, to follow. Nevertheless, I would oppose any attempt to tell those who work for the arms industry or are in the armed forces that they are in sin. That is beyond anyone's power to know. It is not wrong, however, to point out the inconsistency between what they are prepared to do, and the Gospel preached by one who "made no distinction between man and man," who told us to love our enemies and do good to those who hate us, and who died rather than let his followers try to save him through violent means. This is not the whole of the Gospel, but it is no small part of it. The bishops have pointedly *not* told people what they must do under pain of sin in this case, and they are not likely to. One of them, Raymond Hunthausen of Seattle, is often called an extremist by his opponents. He has specifically said that the way he has chosen (the refusal to pay a portion of his income tax) is not necessarily the way for others. He simply calls on his fellow Christians to pray and search their consciences. His concern, and the concern of the majority of bishops, is that the problem of the arms race must be seen as the morally urgent issue it is. The bishops are right not to surrender to those who call themselves experts on the issue. Conservatives did not complain that they were not experts on human sexuality or reproduction when the bishops addressed the question of contraception, nor were there complaints that the papal authors of social encyclicals did not hold graduate degrees in political studies and economics.

There is one argument which opponents of the pastoral letter make which is not without merit, though it does not go to the moral heart of the matter. That is the argument that nuclear deterrence has kept the peace, and that the alternative to a nuclear deterrence will be the massive build-up of conventional forces. This does not take into account the fact that any nuclear war will certainly involve vast civilian populations, and it assumes either that this stand-off can go on forever, or that when it breaks down the devastation will have been worth it. But it is not enough for opponents of the arms race to work for a reduction of nuclear arms without any attention at all to the political and moral dangers inherent in a build-up of conventional forces. Another problem is one raised by Richard Cleaver, formerly of the Des Moines Catholic Worker, now with the American Friends Service Committee: too much of the debate has assumed that this issue is and will remain a matter of debate between the superpowers. If it were only that it would be deadly enough, but nuclear technology is now available to any nation with the will and resources to afford it, and if we are to avoid nuclear disaster a profound international effort will be required.

The issue of expertise is a red herring. There are plenty of lay experts who agree wholeheartedly with the bishops. What worries the right is that the bishops are saying something which runs counter to U.S. government policy. This might indeed divide the American church, as some critics and some of the dissenting bishops have charged. That is not necessarily a bad thing (though I believe the division will not occur). Fear of divisiveness has in the past kept bishops silent where they should have spoken out. The episcopal silence in Germany during the Nazi period was not one of Catholicism's high points. Jesus said that his teaching would set brother against brother and divide households. It is not at all un-Christian to point out that there are some things you may not do, even if your survival is at stake. Arms race proponents seem to be saying that anything at all is permitted; our way of life is worth the risk of annihilation. They dismiss non-violent resistance as naive, ignoring the fact that it brought about the only successful democratic revolution in our century, and wish to pursue a course which even they admit *might* destroy millions of lives, if not all life.

The bishops are much milder than their master; they have not yet called Reagan "that fox," as Jesus called Herod. Reagan is too amiable a fellow to be called a fox. He is more like a lemming, the one in the lead of the horde heading for the edge of the ocean. Lemmings always know exactly what they are doing, and they are always sure, right up to the end.

JOHN GARVEY

Of several minds: *Thomas Powers*

DENSE PACK Q & A

SHOULD IT REALLY GO BACK TO THE DRAWING BOARD?

BACK IN 1967 the Institute for Defense Analysis produced a multi-volume study generally referred to as *Strat X* — for "strategic experimental." The United States had recently completed its deployment of 1000 Minuteman missiles and was asking itself what came next? Eventually Minuteman would be obsolete, or threatened by Soviet missiles, or both, and something would be needed to take its place.

Strat X proposed a number of ideas. One was for a missile to be buried deep beneath the southern slopes of mountains — but over the years it was learned that most of the major mountains in the U.S. are in ranges running north and south,

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which means the slopes are east and west, thus failing to offer protection from Soviet missiles coming down over the North Pole. Another idea called for putting a new generation of missiles in aircraft — but that would run up zillions of dollars in fuel costs, the missiles would not be accurate, and from time to time one of the planes would crash, alarming the public. A third idea proposed a new missile system on submarine tractors which would crawl over the beds of the Great Lakes, and a fourth idea suggested a kind of shell game — hiding the missile among many possible shelters. There were lots of other ideas in *Strat X*, but they all had something large and obvious wrong with them. Finding a way to protect a missile from an accurate nuclear weapon presents an extremely difficult problem. Some would even call it insurmountable.

But the Reagan administration, after much floundering, has finally come up with a new idea for protecting a land-based missile system — "dense pack" — and by now most of us have been exposed to at least one explanation of its essential elements. But since it's not easy to follow the debate over dense pack without having the details firmly in mind, here goes again:

The idea is to base 100 MX missiles — now renamed "Peacekeeper" — in a "segmented column arrangement" or "array," covering an area 1.5 miles wide and 14 miles long. Each of the missiles would be in a hardened silo — there is a bit of sleight of hand on this point, as we shall see — about 1800 feet from its neighbors. The former-MX is a big, threatening missile — 7000-mile range, 10 MIRVs carrying warheads with a yield of 350 kilotons, accurate enough to come within a tenth of a nautical mile of the target half the time. The idea is that the missiles would be protected by an effect called fratricide — the destruction of brother missiles by ones that have already detonated. To destroy Peacekeeper, Soviet missiles would have to be right on target with a big warhead. Peacekeepers would be so close together the missiles attacking one of them would destroy others attacking a neighbor. The Pentagon estimates that 70 Peacekeepers would survive an attack, providing more than enough warheads — 700 — for a devastating retaliatory blow against the Soviet Union.

The president's new plan received a crushing rebuff when the House voted against the program some weeks ago, but no one should conclude that the MX and dense pack are dead. When a president really wants something he can find many ways to keep it alive until Congress is willing to give it to him. Jimmy Carter thought he killed the B-1 bomber once and for all back in 1977, just as President Kennedy had when he decided against an earlier version. The next test for dense pack will come in the Senate, where Republicans are in a majority, and where the president will doubtless follow a cautious, minimal strategy to keep the project alive.

Following are ten questions which the Senate ought to ask before agreeing to let the administration take its plan back to the drawing board.

1. *Will the Soviets respond by adopting a policy of launch on warning (LOW) for their land-based missiles?* The Pentagon admits Peacekeeper will have a "greatly enhanced hard-target kill capability." Indeed, that's one of the reasons they want it. That means it could destroy Russian missiles in their silos, a prospect which we find so alarming where Minuteman is concerned that we're planning to build dense pack. The cheapest response to such a threat is to prepare to fire your own missiles as soon as you learn they are under attack. Since an ICBM takes only twenty-five minutes to reach its target, the response to a warning has got to be pretty much automatic. Such a system could fail mechanically. There has been much talk of accidental war in the years since 1945, but most of it has been off the wall. The dangers posed by LOW are real, and would all but guarantee an all-out city-busting spasm war in which both sides would try to exterminate the other. If the Pentagon can't guarantee the Russians won't adopt a launch-on-warning policy — and how *could* they possibly guarantee such a thing? — then the United States ought to start *giving* the Russians our latest computer technology. If you think the situation is scary now, wait till you start breaking into a cold sweat every time you read in the paper about a new sunspot cycle.

2. *What will be the environmental impact of a full-scale nuclear attack on dense pack?* Federal law will require the Air Force to issue an environmental impact statement for the proposed dense pack basing area at Francis E. Warren Air Force Base near Cheyenne, Wyoming, but past practice suggests they will make no mention of the possible environmental results of an attack. The rationale is twofold: (a) if we get the system the Russians will be deterred and there won't *be* an attack, and (b) if there is an attack we won't be worrying about the environment. This is a short-sighted approach. Weapons are made to be used, and we ought to think about the possible results.

A full-scale attack on dense pack would involve two hundred warheads with a total megatonnage of 200-1000, the equivalent of up to one *billion* tons of TNT. Peacekeepers will be in superhard silos, meaning the Soviets would have to detonate their warheads on or under the ground in order to destroy the target. At the very least this would lift many thousands of tons of debris into the atmosphere, creating a massive fallout plume downwind of the target area. Much debris would enter the troposphere, with possible effects on the weather. The target area itself would be long and thin, like the stab wound of a knife in the surface of the earth. Is there an earthquake fault zone near Cheyenne, Wyoming?

3. *Does the Department of Defense really know which array will work best?* The DoD statement describing dense pack says "different array shapes will create different fratricide problems for the Soviets" and recommends "a column or segmented column arrangement." That means alternating rows of three silos and two silos down the length of the basing area. It is a rule of thumb that when the DoD admits an open question, it is only because it has found itself totally unable to make up its mind. In the present instance the array *is* the plan; if the Pentagon hasn't really decided on which array, it hasn't got a plan.

4. *Is this only the tip of the iceberg?* The cost estimate for dense pack is $26 billion, but most experts think some sort

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of anti-ballistic missile defense (ABM) system will not be far behind, pushing the cost to $40 billion. The addition of a second 100 Peacekeepers — 200 is the number the Air Force has been planning since the very beginning — will double the price. It has been years since we have heard much about "cost-effectiveness" from the Defense Department, but the truth is some things cost more than they're worth.

5. *If fratricide works with "closely spaced basing," the Pentagon's phrase for dense pack, why won't it work with Minuteman?* The whole concept of fratricide was worked up in the mid-1970s by the Air Force, which argued that the Soviets could not really threaten Minuteman. (Minuteman was, after all, the Air Force's principal asset. One major reason MX has been pushed so relentlessly is that it fulfills an unwritten promise to give the next big weapons system to the Air Force. This is taken as a basic fact of life in Washington.) Why not superharden Minuteman silos and put them close together? The answer is that the Pentagon really wants the "greatly enhanced hard-target kill capability" promised by Peacekeeper. They ought to be required to explain why.

6. *Is "superhardening" really possible?* The Pentagon is talking of silos protected with so much steel and concrete they could withstand blast pressures of up to 100,000 pounds per square inch (psi). Frankly, these figures come as something of a shock. They invite disbelief. Not so long ago it was only wildmen who spoke of Russian missiles hardened to 10,000 psi. Minuteman is estimated at 2000 psi. Now, suddenly, we are talking of a *hundred thousand*, ten times the wildest previous estimates. This is what scientists refer to as an order of magnitude. Whence comes this amazing breakthrough?

7. *Is dense pack playing games with SALT?* The terms of SALT II, which both the United States and the Soviet Union are pledged to honor, provide for new *mobile* missile systems to be built by both sides. The old MX plans all called for something truly mobile or at least plausibly mobile. Peacekeeper is not mobile at all. It will be based in a fixed silo so immobile nothing but a direct hit could budge it. The administration has been saying it falls within the SALT II provisions because it will be contained in its own removable capsule, and adds that they might be moved from time to time. This smacks of legalistic sleight of hand. We can imagine the anguished howls of protest from Paul Nitze and Richard Perle if the Russians engaged in similar wordplay. When the Russians took advantage of an ambiguity in SALT I — a limitation to increasing missile size to "fifteen percent," which Moscow interpreted to mean fifteen percent in height and width, giving a total *volume* increase much greater than fifteen percent — critics in this country raised the roof. Now we are doing the same thing, with even less justification. Thus a vote for dense pack is in effect a vote against SALT II, a kind of backdoor refusal to ratify.

8. *How long will it last?* The "initial operating capability" (IOC) for dense pack will be 1986, the year which Air Force planners have had in mind for years. The system's major justification is that it will be survivable, more or less invulnerable to Soviet attack. But even if it works to begin with, which many experts doubt, how long will it take for the Soviets to find a way to destroy it? Not long, it seems. The Pentagon, which may be presumed to present its case in its rosiest light, concedes that by the "mid to late 1990s, the Soviets may seek technological breakthroughs, which may allow them to deploy low-yield, highly accurate, earth-penetrating weapons that could threaten the hard CSB capsules and avoid fratricide." Thus, the system's main defender admits it may be good for only ten years. Many critics say five.

Over the years President Reagan has poked much fun at our "aging B-52s," which, he says, are often older than the men who fly them. And yet the B-52s are still effective, like the Poseidon submarines and the Minuteman itself. Does it make sense to spend billions on a weapons system which may not last even a decade?

9. *Is the Pentagon trying to say Trident submarines will be vulnerable by the mid-1990s?* The justification claimed for dense pack is that it will give us a reliable means to retaliate in the event of a Soviet attack. But the Trident submarines already give us that, and will probably go on doing so long after Peacekeeper is hostage to new methods of Soviet attack. Not only that, but new Trident D-5 missiles will offer just as much "hard-target kill capability" as Peacekeeper. This leads to the final question.

10. *What is dense pack for?* Dense pack will be expensive, it will invite expansion, it will not last long, and it will do things which other systems are already doing just as well. So what is the real reason the Reagan administration wants to build it?

Reagan was elected following a campaign in which he said the United States had "unilaterally disarmed" during the 1970s. He has claimed that the Soviets are "ahead" in strategic weaponry, that American systems are decrepit and primitive by current standards, that the Soviets will never negotiate seriously until they see we mean to threaten them with new systems, and that all three legs of the strategic "Triad" — bombers, missiles, and submarines — are in urgent need of modernization. His plan for a new missile system has got more readily apparent flaws than just about any other major proposal put forward in our lifetimes, however old we may be. But Reagan has based his policy on national defense on the promise we are going to *do* something. It's hard not to conclude he wants to build dense pack for only one reason: because he said he would.

THOMAS POWERS

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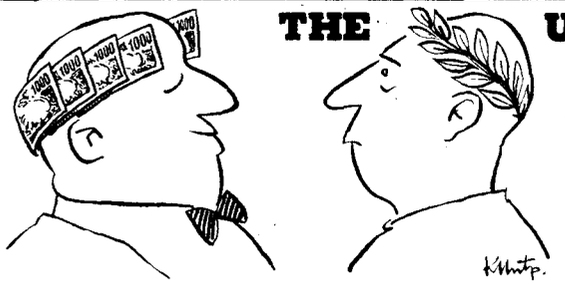

THE UNMELTABLE ETHNIC MELTS DOWN

Michael Novak & his ultrasuper democraticapitalism

PETER STEINFELS

"The odyssey of a Catholic in our society, if he decides to remain one, takes peculiar turns."
— Michael Novak,
opening sentence of *Naked I Leave*

"The first of all moral obligations is to think clearly."
— Michael Novak,
The Spirit of Democratic Capitalism

"MICHAEL NOVAK has written what I think is perhaps the most important book of the decade." The speaker was Michael J. Horowitz, a senior aide to David A. Stockman at the Office of Management and Budget. Horowitz was lamenting the fact that conservatives and corporate leaders had abandoned all the "moral buzz words" to liberals. He suggested Novak's *The Spirit of Democratic Capitalism* as a corrective.

People like Mr. Horowitz have an advantage in reading Michael Novak. Faced with *The Spirit of Democratic Capitalism,* for instance, Mr. Horowitz is most likely not haunted by the image of the Michael Novak of *A Theology for Radical Politics* posed in white turtleneck and lovebeads, advocating a "revolution of consciousness" which would "reintroduce freedom into an industrial, technological state." According to *that* Michael Novak, a Christian could hardly "live in these United States and not protest with every fiber of his being against the militarization of American life, the appalling mediocrity of American imagination and sensibilities, and the heedlessness and irrationality of merely technological progress." Most important, someone had to help the young generation of New Left activists to articulate their intuitive rebellion and "construct a new system of life in America."

"A Christian theologian," wrote Novak in explanation of his own efforts, "does well to commit his life to such an enterprise."

A life, like a generation, is not as long as it used to be. Today Michael Novak devotes his considerable talents to articulating the inchoate ideals of successful executives rather than fledgling revolutionaries, to making the best case for Reaganism rather than radicalism. Those who have observed the successive phases of Novak's evolution are all too tempted to greet his latest performance as defender and explicator of "democratic capitalism" with more than a little cynicism. What they begrudge him is not so much that he has changed his mind — though, to be fair, his evolution would sit a lot better with many had it been, like Garry Wills's, from right to left rather than the opposite — but the way he has done it. Each new cause is taken up with the same lack of restraint, the same sense that Michael Novak is the first to touch these shores, the same need to bolster his latest enthusiasm with the severest judgments on those whose outlook he had sympathetically portrayed not long before. "Skepticism," said Santayana, "is the chastity of the mind." In that respect, Novak has been ideologically promiscuous.

I understand, therefore, the impulse not to take Novak seriously; indeed, the more I read him, the more I understand it. Yet take him seriously we must, if only because so many of the world's Mr. Horowitzes do. At a time when debates about religion and public policy have grown intense, Novak, with an astonishing energy as well as a grasp of religious language and history uncommon in the political world, has established himself as a kind of one-man battalion in what he calls a "war of ideas." To dismiss him out of hand or to attribute his changing opinions to fashion or opportunism is not only unfair, it suggests to his newest audience that Novak's critics have only *ad hominem* complaints to sustain them. If familiarity with Novak has bred more than a little incredulity, it is important that the reasons be set forth, even at some length. What is more, *The Spirit of Democratic Capitalism* (Simon and Schuster, $17.50, 434 pp.) raises a number of basic issues that are always well worth reviewing. Whatever its other flaws, no one can accuse it of not being provocative.

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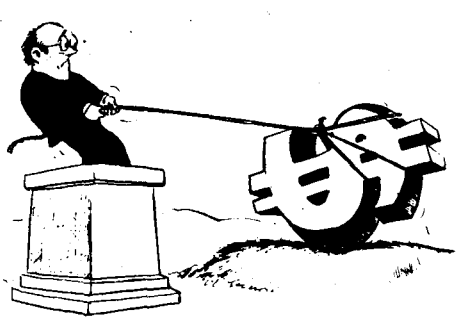
THERE SHOULD be no underestimating exactly how dramatic a transformation in Novak's views his latest book signals. At one point in *The Spirit of Democratic Capitalism*, repeating the familiar charge that intellectuals disdain ordinary people and the polyester, fast-food, gas-guzzler tastes which the market and "consumerism" serve, Novak admits that he, too, "once uncritically accepted these conventions." He quotes a passage from *A Theology for Radical Politics* in which he referred to "the hollowness of so much American life; the vacant eyes watching television and drinking beer; the tired eyes of the men on the commuter train; the efficient eyes of the professor and the manager; the sincere eyes of the politician. Americans . . . do not know who they are . . . are violent because they secretly resent the lies they are forced to live. Unable to live with themselves, Americans level the earth, build and destroy," etc., etc.

This is vintage Novak prose and one can understand how he might be embarrassed by it ("vacant eyes . . . drinking beer"). Still, Novak's *mea culpa* subtly misrepresents his own thinking here, as he does that of many others. As one can plainly see, his lament was not limited to the state of the common man and mass tastes. He was as hard on the professors and managers as on the stereotypical TV-watching beer-drinker. Novak's early critique was of an entire society and its dominant consciousness. More apt to describe this society as "technological" or "pragmatic" than as "capitalist," he saw it as progressively reducing the richness of experience under the pressure of functional rationality, the demands of specialization and mass production, and the transformation of human relations and personality into commodities. The individual that this society was increasingly producing was isolated, lonely, at war with his or her own feelings, anesthetized to both sexual love and tragedy, incapable of acknowledging evil and America's sometimes devastating role in the world. The forces creating this desiccated consciousness were coming to dominate every part of life. The university, the media, the churches were all hobbled and manipulated by the economic and political powers that be. One can find similar descriptions not once but dozens of times in Novak's writings, and in far more forceful terms than this summary can suggest.

Naturally, *A Theology for Radical Politics*, written under the influence of the New Left and in the heat of conflict over the war in Vietnam, was most unrestrained with this kind of condemnation. Things had reached such a point in America that Novak even toyed with the idea of armed revolution, only to reject it as much on tactical grounds as on any others. "Though the question of employment of arms and open violence *must remain open*," he wrote, "it does not follow that violence is the only or even the ordinary method of the revolutionary. . . . In the United States *at the present time*, the moment has clearly not arrived for armed revolution. Riots in the cities may well be a foretaste of what is ahead, and those who serve now in the army *may one day be grateful to have learned military skills*." (My italics.) Yet much of the vision of America found in *A Theology for Radical Politics* was equally present in *The Rise of the Unmeltable Ethnics*. It was, indeed, against this America, now more explicitly identified with the WASP establishment and the liberal educated classes, that Novak wished to defend ethnics. "It is a Protestant country, stressing how each man must earn his own way, restrain himself, master himself . . . millions of squirrels shut up in millions of cages of their own fashioning. And it is a Freudian country, stressing how each man must liberate himself, explore himself . . . millions of squirrels biting their way out of the millions of cages constructed inside them. . . ." Novak protested " 'modernization,' that is to say, the hegemony of economic power." "The centralization implicit in the pursuit of rational efficiency is monstrous." He launched a coruscating attack on the cult of productivity. "Many hidden costs — selfishness, pollution, envy, international conflict, and alienation — are lurking in the word 'productivity.' Productivity means thinking of the earth as a planet to be conquered and despoiled. . . ." Novak also wrote of "the anger, low morale, and alienation of our workingman." He wanted to see industry decentralized, factories and work schedules reintegrated into the patterns of neighborhood and school and family life.

> Cynicism marks the laborer's life. *That* is the radical defect of our technology, constructed as it is upon the ideology of power, objectivity, efficiency, and production. . . . What our experts (and ideologies) have done is to deprive the workingman of art. To confine him to crowded and noisy homes, to polluted sections of the cities, to poor and dispirited education systems, to a horizonless income peak, to a constant stream of silent contempt — all this was bad enough. But to take from him, as well, pride in the arts of his own hands was to strip his spirit raw. When work becomes "a job," violence accumulates beneath the surface of the skin.

Several years later, in *Choosing Our King*, Novak remained unsparing toward the "adolescent American dream" and the economic structures that bolstered it. The Nixonian conception of politics, he wrote, was modeled on the managerial efficiency of the corporation. "What was at stake in the early months of the second Nixon administration . . . was the supplanting of the nation's fundamental symbolic form, embedded in the Constitutional 'system,' by a new symbolic form, that of the high-technology corporation. It was not exactly a totalitarian dictatorship the nation was moving toward . . . It was rather the controlled efficiency of the Chase Manhattan Bank, IBM, Exxon, and General Motors. . . . The men around the President merged the corporate system with the Constitutional system." As for American life in general,



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Novak insisted that national maturity demanded that we recognize our enthnocentricity; our shoddy quest for superlatives; our self-deceiving optimism and desperate pursuit of happiness; our illusion of innocence; and our dream of solitary, individualist self-fulfillment. "There are excellences in American culture . . . but against the rush of money and celebrity and conglomerated industries, these sources of excellence find survival difficult."

FROM ALL THIS, it should be clear that *The Spirit of Democratic Capitalism* represents two massive shifts, even reversals, in Novak's perspective. One is a shift in values, in the norms by which he evaluates the surrounding social system. Formerly, realism and pragmatism, productivity, efficiency, and economic rationality were terms of scorn. Now they are accolades. Formerly, Novak suggested, sometimes by the use of quotation marks, that the claims made by such words were spurious, that what passed for realism, pragmatism, productivity, and rationality was in truth constricted, ideological, destructive, and irrational. Now such notions are taken at face value and honored. Capitalist productivity, efficiency, and economic rationality are conducive to virtue and self-government.

But Novak has also shifted in his description of what actually transpires in the social system. Where once he saw it as corrosive of inner life, pressing toward shoddiness, imposing isolation, and destructive of communities, now he sees it as enriching and humanizing, demanding of excellence, supportive of association, and giving birth to "a new type of human being, the communitarian individual." Where once he saw the society as dangerously militarized, now he sees it as vaccinated against the military ethos. Where once he saw cultural institutions in the thrall of economic and political power, now he sees them as vigorously independent; indeed, if anything, the economic institutions are in thrall to the cultural. Where once he found the forces of the economy in conflict with family life, now he sees family and capitalism linked in an ultimately supportive tension. Where once he saw inequalities of wealth and power as scandalous, now he sees them as "in tune with natural inequalities which everyone experiences every day." It is not too much to say that *The Spirit of Democratic Capitalism* marks the intellectual, if not the social, assimilation of Michael Novak into the world and worldview he had previously identified with the WASP establishment and the corporate, professional, and intellectual managers of both left and right.

THERE IS NOTHING wrong with a person changing his mind. But why should readers be convinced that Novak's later views are any sounder than his earlier ones? What is involved, after all, is quite a lot more than a few deprecations of mass taste or occasional passing lapses in *A Theology for Radical Politics*. It seems too easy to dispose of the matter with the explanation he had not "looked more closely at my neighbors and companions" but had been taken in by "literary conventions." If he had really held his earlier judgments so fiercely and firmly on such slight evidence, what confidence can readers have in his current opinions? Why should they believe that the scales suddenly fell from his eyes in the mid-seventies? Why should they not suspect he has simply traded in one set of "conventions" for another, exchanged those of the "literary" world that evidently dominated his thinking so easily for those of the world of businessmen, economists, policy planners, and conservative politicians where he now operates?

Novak's major explanation for his change of mind is that in his forties he finally got around to studying economics. He even claims that during all those years of writing about international affairs, ethnicity, and domestic politics, he deliberately preserved his economic virginity: "I saved economics . . . until last." Of Novak's neophyte status in this subject there can be no doubt — his book shows not even passing familiarity with opposing viewpoints at any sophisticated level — but why, exactly, should this be a recommendation of his newfound truth to others?

The Spirit of Democratic Capitalism does not, it should be made clear, rest on economic analysis. It is in no way a tightly argued, thoroughly documented book that contains within itself all the necessary justification for its author's conclusions. Like Novak's other books, it abounds in vast generalizations — about America, about groups of people, about social structures. Insofar as these can be documented at all, Novak leans heavily on the conference papers and favored authorities of the American Enterprise Institute, where he is a Resident Scholar, even as earlier he had relied uncritically on New Left sources. Novak's use of evidence does less to explain than to illustrate or reflect his changed standpoint. Just as the values attached to key words in his vocabulary like *realism* and *pragmatism* have shifted without explanation, whole bodies of literature have dropped from his range of references, to be neither cited nor refuted, as though they ceased to have any factual value or compelling force now that they no longer coincide with his own position.

Even the reference points that do endure prove to be remarkably malleable. Novak has never failed to invoke the blessing of Jacques Maritain, for instance, on every phase of his career. It was Maritain who "provided for me an intellectual path for moving from the conservatism of my hometown" to the tough-minded "liberalism of John F. Kennedy." Nonetheless — this was now the beginning of the seventies — Novak characterized Maritain as "more 'New Left' than 'liberal.' " But by 1982, with Novak returning to something very much like that old hometown conservatism, Maritain was right along with him — the patron saint of democratic capitalism.

Novak's personal history, too, seems subject to sudden revision. Despite that earlier reference to "moving from the conservatism of my hometown," we are now informed that *The Spirit of Democratic Capitalism* represents a break "with the tradition of Christian socialism in which I was reared." Novak continues, "For many of my adult years I thought of myself as a democratic socialist." Although this revelation obviously renders his recent conversion all the more striking, it comes as something of a surprise to those of us who cannot

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remember a single occasion when Novak, even in his most radical period, declared in print that he was a socialist. Perhaps such occasions can be recovered by the archivist, but one must admit that Novak was extraordinarily discreet about his socialist beliefs in the years when he allegedly held them, compared to his frank confessions now that he has repented. No one should doubt Novak's ability to explain how this "conservatism of my hometown" and this "tradition of Christian socialism in which I was reared" were really one and the same thing; but it is this sheer facility for selectively emphasizing different facets of a reality in order to make the necessary case of the moment that undermines Novak's credibility. All is flux, nothing is stationary; one is reminded of the Heraclitian roots of Greek sophistry. One is also reminded of Marx's line — how appropriate in this case — describing capitalism's unbridled power of transformation: "All that is solid melts into air."

NOWHERE DOES Novak's rhetoric run roughshod over careful thinking so much as in the central concept of his book: democratic capitalism. Recall the old joke about the worker who exits from his Eastern European plant each evening pushing a wheelbarrow. The Communist guard inspects the wheelbarrow, finds nothing being stolen. Every night the same procedure, and never can the guard find any of the plant's property in the wheelbarrow. But suspicion dies hard, and so does curiousity. Finally the guard begs the worker, under a solemn pledge of secrecy, to reveal what he is stealing and how he is concealing it. The answer, of course: wheelbarrows.

"Democratic capitalism" is Michael Novak's wheelbarrow. While so many of his critics are suspiciously wondering whether he has slipped this or that virtue into the container, without its legitimately belonging there, it is the container itself, the very concept of democratic capitalism, that he is boldly wheeling past them.

The mere fact that two words can be put together does not mean they represent a reality. "Democratic Caesarism" was the label that devotees of a flamboyant Latin American dictator pasted on his regime. "Democratic centralism" is the Leninists' way of saying that the party elite makes all the decisions. "Democratic capitalism," however, is a somewhat more complicated phrase. Clearly there are nations that, at the same time, are more or less democratic and more or less capitalist. But then again there are men (Novak and I are both examples) who are at once tall and balding — without that fact justifying a concept such as "tall baldingism." The question, in the former case as in the latter, is what exactly is the relationship between the two elements named. Is their simultaneous presence merely fortuitous? Are they independent of each other, or mutually supporting, or in conflict? Is one the cause of the other? Is one the *necessary* cause of the other? Does their relationship remain the same throughout all stages of development?

Questions like these are simply bowled over by the force of Novak's rhetoric. Democratic capitalism is introduced in the book's first sentence, and by sheer repetition it takes on a life of its own, eventually to roll like a juggernaut through hundreds of pages. It becomes the subject of active verbs, is even personified: "Democratic capitalism . . . glories in divergence. . . ." "It stimulates invention . . . delights irreverently in change, dissent, and singularity." "It instructs nations . . . awakens individuals. . . ." We even learn "its two favorite words." (These turn out to be "new" and "improved," as in, I suppose, "new, improved, long-lasting Sudso.")

Yet for all its overwhelming presence, democratic capitalism, like most of Novak's notions, remains a mightily shifty phenomenon. What purports to be a discussion of democratic capitalism in general is for the most part a discussion of the United States alone, and even that with no reference to the specific history or conditions, other than "democratic capitalism" of course, that have shaped American society. Whenever something beneficial is attributed to capitalism, e.g., the material progress of Europe since 1800, it is attributed to *democratic* capitalism, quite regardless of whether democracy was involved at all. Whenever capitalism shows a less attractive face, e.g., its alliances with dictatorial regimes, this is attributed to "bastard forms of capitalism" and held to be an unstable and transient reality. This is the intellectual equivalent of three-card monte.

"The natural logic of capitalism leads to democracy." Novak believes that this is a fact of history. Yet if there is one thing almost totally lacking from Novak's argument it is any sense of history, better yet, any knowledge of history. "The watershed year," he writes, "was 1776. Almost simultaneously, Adam Smith published *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations* and the first democratic capitalist republic came into existence in the United States." Just like that. Democratic capitalism, it seems, was "invented" by its "founding fathers" around the end of the eighteenth century, or rather it sprang, apparently fully-armed, from their Enlightenment brows. (One of Novak's favorite rhetorical devices is to refer to democratic capitalism as "designed" to do this or that; the word suggests a degree of regularity, rationality, and purposefulness belied by history.)

This is hardly adequate even for the narrowly Anglo-American historical viewpoint that, ironically, now dominates the thinking of this once Unmeltable Ethnic. Indeed, there is an embarrassing parallel between the argument of *The Spirit of Democratic Capitalism* and that of turn-of-the-century Anglo-American nativists. Novak builds his case on a statistical association between capitalism and democracy and a similar association between socialism and dictatorship. In exactly the same fashion, the Anglo-American nativists pointed to a statistical association between free, tolerant institutions and Protestant and Northern European races, on the one hand, and between corrupt despotisms and Catholic Southern and Eastern European peoples, on the other. The nativists concluded that you could not preserve political liberty without preserving the numerical and cultural hegemony of Protestant Anglo-Saxons, and that the Catholic culture of Southern and Eastern European immigrants was incompatible with democracy. In

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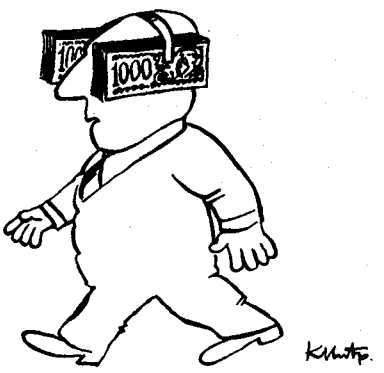
like manner, Novak concludes that capitalism is essential for democracy and socialism incompatible with it.

Both Novak and the nativists are guilty of confusing historical correlations with logical ones, but both are also bad, because ethnocentric, historians, Novak, for instance, shows no awareness of the stages or process by which capitalism was established in any nations other than Britain and the U.S. Even worse, he is oblivious to the history of democracy. This results in ludicrous anachronisms, as when he scolds Leo XIII and Max Weber for not celebrating the virtues of *democratic* capitalism, without any notice of just how democratic was the capitalism of their generations.

Consider so basic a criterion of democracy as the right to vote. In 1850, outside of Switzerland, not a single European state granted universal suffrage even to males. The United Kingdom granted the right to vote to approximately one million property-owners out of a population of 27.5 million; Belgium had 60,000 voters out of 4.7 million inhabitants — and those were among the most "democratic" of states. Britain's landmark Second Reform Act of 1867 extended the franchise to no more than eight percent of the population. In the post-1870 Kingdom of Italy (which the popes had before their eyes), no more than one or two percent of the population could vote before 1882, seven percent until 1913. Universal male suffrage was not established until after World War I, female suffrage after World War II. Germany, at the time Max Weber wrote *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, maintained a complicated voting system that effectively blocked universal suffrage. Perhaps it is too much to expect Novak to know things like this. After all, he can define democratic capitalism by referring to "social systems like those of the United States, West Germany, and Japan" without reflecting on the fact that two out of three of his leading illustrations existed as decidely *undemocratic* capitalist societies for a longer period of time than as democratic ones, and that they settled into democracy only after being militarily conquered and occupied by the third.

SHOULD NOVAK's capitalism-democracy link be relegated, therefore, to the category of half-educated pamphleteering? Not quite. There is a real historical link between capitalism and democracy, but it is by way of a third "ism" which, for some reason, Novak has preferred not to name. I mean liberalism. Liberalism was the creed which, on both sides of the Atlantic, generally represented the political interests of new economic forces in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Liberalism strove to limit the power of the state (except when it came to enforcing contracts, maintaining a stable currency, subsidizing or protecting new industrial enterprises, outlawing labor unions, and breaking strikes). Liberalism demanded "free institutions" — some kind of deliberative parliament, accountable state officials, freedom of religion, freedom from political censorship, independent courts, an end to hereditary privileges.



Modern democracy has been built on this liberal heritage. But liberalism — and in this it spoke for capitalism — was highly ambivalent about democracy. Liberal leaders of the rising economic classes needed the support of the "people" to break the monopoly on political power of the landed aristocracy. But actual rule by the "people" was something else again, conjuring up dangerous leveling and all the excesses of the French Revolution. Liberal principles had democratic implications; liberal politics sometimes encouraged democratic forces; but liberal — and capitalist — self-interest dictated drawing the line far short of genuinely democratic government.

From about the middle of the nineteenth century, the link liberalism had provided between capitalist forces and democratic ones was increasingly broken. In the later industrial powers like Germany and Japan, capitalism was introduced by bureaucrats and aristocrats as much as by the bourgeoisie. In the older capitalist regimes, liberals often turned sharply against democracy. The difficulty that faces any theoretician of "democratic capitalism" is obvious: Since the latter part of the nineteenth century, there has scarcely been an expression of democratic reform toward which most capitalist leaders were not, at best, indifferent or, more commonly, hostile.

Take that basic matter of the suffrage again. Universal manhood suffrage did not come to most European nations until late in the nineteenth or early in the twentieth century. The vote for women came later. In the U.S., Southern blacks, whose enslavement had been terminated at least in part because it represented a pre-capitalist way of life, were nonetheless deprived of their voting rights precisely during the heyday of expanding capitalism. The struggles for ballot-box democracy, including, besides universal suffrage, the secret ballot and paid representatives, were led in almost every case, by working-class movements or left-wing reformers highly critical of existing capitalism if not explicitly socialist.

Much the same can be said of other efforts to assure or expand democratic liberties in this century. Freedom of belief and expression, freedom to organize in independent unions, guarantees of equal justice in the courts, minimums of well-being that secure a degree of political as well as economic independence for masses of citizens — has capitalist leadership been in the forefront of recent struggles for any of these things? Did it head the resistance to the wave of ideological terrorism that swept over Western Europe between the world wars? Quite the contrary: it was nurturing and accommodating.

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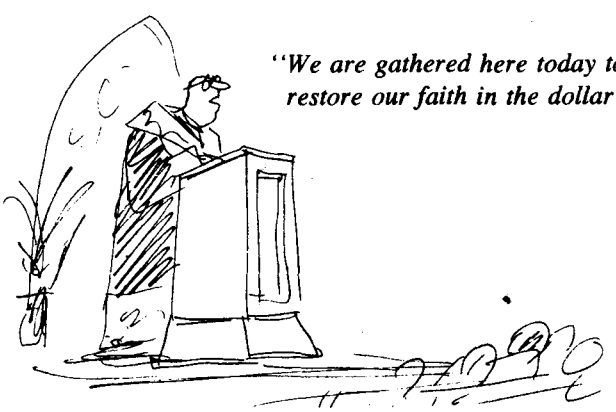
NOVAK IS SO innocent of historical knowledge that he can stumble into appalling errors. In his section on Reinhold Niebuhr, I was startled to read, for example, that in 1933 Niebuhr "also became disillusioned with German socialists, *only ninety-six of whom* voted against the grant of dictatorial powers to Hitler" (My italics). The April, 1933 article by Niebuhr which Novak cites here actually begins by describing the dominant socialist role in the establishment of the Weimar republic. Niebuhr then contrasts that success to the scene, fourteen years later, when the German Reichstag "abolished parliamentary government and initiated a dictatorship by an overwhelming vote with only 96 socialist votes recorded against the enabling act." Niebuhr's "only" was not bemoaning the fact that some greater number of socialists did not oppose dictatorship, but rather that the most genuine opponents of dictatorship — the socialists — had been reduced to so few votes and so little power. The fact is that the vote of *every* socialist deputy — and most texts I have seen say ninety-four, not ninety-six — who had not already been jailed, forced into hiding, or driven to flee the country, was cast against Hitler's Enabling Act. This unanimous vote was cast in the face of Hitler's vitriolic denunciations and at considerable personal risk. Only an abysmal ignorance of modern history, combined perhaps with a prejudice that assumes socialists are acquiescent toward dictatorship, could lead someone to so misconstrue Niebuhr's meaning. Niebuhr was indeed somewhat disillusioned with German socialism — but mainly because it had been so complacent about the likelihood of combining democracy and capitalism. But if Novak cannot be expected to know that every single available socialist vote was cast against dictatorial powers for Hitler, he cannot be expected to know that every single vote of the German parties representing capitalism — and of the Catholic party, too — was cast *for* Hitler's Enabling Act. Which, it seems, would be a more relevant topic of concern for an advocate of democratic capitalism to reflect upon.

THE SPIRIT OF DEMOCRATIC CAPITALISM is marked by dozens and dozens of such blunders and misunderstandings. We are treated to a defense of interest-group pluralism against its critics without any accurate representation of what those critics ("certain writers") have argued. We are told, "Many, perhaps most, leaders of major industrial and marketing concerns spring from poorer families." (A 1978 survey by *Fortune* showed that nine percent of the chief executives of American industry reported coming from poor families, and "some . . . may be suspected of a little romanticizing"; a more objective measure was the fact that only three percent had fathers who were unskilled laborers as opposed to sixty percent whose fathers were professionals or business executives.) We are informed that "not long ago," the U.S. "was trapped in the same immemorial poverty and underdevelopment as other nations." (According to a major study by Alice Hanson Jones, the American colonies were among the most prosperous of regions in the world as early as 1700; in 1774, two years before democratic capitalism was invented by Adam Smith — or Michael Novak — the American per capita GNP was already twice the 1974 figure for nations with about one-third of the world's population and at the top of the modern range for nations with another third of the world's population.) Novak offers some pertinent criticism of popular writing on Latin American poverty, but his general argument about Latin American development simply skirts all confrontation with opposing theories of any sophistication.



"We are gathered here today to restore our faith in the dollar."

Not every fact in Novak's book is wrong. There are many subjective judgments about social phenomena that are plausible and even eloquent, especially if one forgets the author's earlier plausible and eloquent judgments to the contrary. But the overall impression is of a forced case, one pumped up by flashy language and a sheer will to assertion.

That this needn't have been so is demonstrated by a similarly titled book, *The Ethic of Democratic Capitalism* (Fortress, $10.95, 286 pp.), written by a Lutheran theologian Robert Benne and published with little fanfare a few months before Novak's book. Where Novak is sweeping and grandiloquent, Benne is specific and systematic. From the first he admits that by "democratic capitalism" — a phrase he attributes to Novak— he only means "the American political economy," and that other terms like "liberal capitalism" or "social market capitalism" might have done as well. Almost too methodically he sets out the principles of Niebuhrian theology and Rawlsian philosophy by which he proposes to evaluate the American economy. Though his footnotes are far sparser than Novak's, he displays a much more serious grasp of the Marxist and Keynesian theorists he would dispute. Unlike Novak, he sets forth these adversaries' positions directly and carefully, fully indicating the divisions of expert opinion and stating his own conclusions firmly but modestly. None of Novak's rhapsodies here: *The Ethic of Democratic Capitalism* is sober and qualified.

Yet both books develop common themes. They both maintain that American pluralism is positively served by American capitalism, and they both make this argument against the background of criticism emanating from religious activists who are increasingly attracted by some form of democratic socialism. I would like to consider this argument about democracy, pluralism, and the attitudes of religious critics toward capitalism and socialism in a separate article to be published in the February 11 *Commonweal*.

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SHAKEN BY EVENTS IN EGYPT & ETHIOPIA

The plight of the Copts

RANDALL FEGLEY

ACCORDING TO EARLY Christian tradition, the church in northeastern Africa was founded by St. Mark the Evangelist who established the Egyptian (Coptic) church and by St. Philip who converted an Ethiopian eunuch on the road between Jerusalem and Gaza. When the Roman Empire was partitioned after the death of Emperor Theodosius in 395 A.D., Egypt became part of the Byzantine Empire. Christianity flourished in North Africa and in Ethiopia, where it became the official religion in 330 A.D.

However, in 452 A.D. at the Council of Chalcedon, the Egyptian church was split into two sects: the Monophysites who were the vast majority of believers and the Melkites who were a small but influential minority. The Monophysites were disestablished because their faith held there were not two natures, divine and human, in Jesus Christ but only one, divine. As a result of the Chalcedon decision, the Empress Pulcheria founded the Melkite or Imperial church as the official church of the realm and gave most churchlands to her followers in spite of the fact that most of the clergy remained Monophysite. This factionalism contributed to the instability which allowed Egypt to fall to the Muslim Arabs in 641. Ethiopia, however, retained ties with Alexandria and did not fall to Islam, but barriers of geography, politics, and race isolated it from the rest of Christendom. Nevertheless, these churches have millions of adherents today, and Christianity is a subject of increasing controversy in Egypt, Ethiopia, and the Sudan.

Under Islamic rule, the Egyptian Christian community was persecuted from the ninth century until the nineteenth. Following an uprising in 830, Christians were left in the minority. Their churches, books, and homes were burnt, their clergy imprisoned and sometimes murdered, and their services banned throughout Egypt. Freedom of movement was limited and special taxes and clothing regulations (for Christians: dark blue clothes, a black turban, and a five-and-a-half pound wooden cross around the neck; and for Jews: yellow clothing, a black turban, and a heavy ball round the neck) were applied to all religious minorities.

During the rule of Mohammed Ali, an Albanian Muslim of Christian ancestry, an increasing number of Christians were employed as civil servants, as they were generally better educated than their Muslim counterparts. When Britain occupied Egypt in 1882, the Coptic population had been reduced to only a bit more than seven hundred thousand, or ten percent of the national population. Muslims were encouraged to take "their proper place in their own country," and the Copts felt treated with disfavor and injustice, even after they were freed of some legal disabilities in 1884.

However, the Sadat government threw many more obstacles in the way of religious freedom. A law which requires a presidential decree to build or repair a church has been retained since the days of the Ottoman Empire. No permit is granted if the site in question is near a mosque, bridge, canal, market, government agency,or the Nile; or if the Muslim clergy or a neighbor objects.

All Christian hospitals, schools, and lands have been confiscated without compensation. With Islam as the state religion, the Koran is the major source of Egyptian law. The Grand Mufti (the highest jurist in Islamic law) has clearly stated time and again that "Muslims should never accept non-Muslims as full and equal partners in the nation. Indeed they are not. A non-Muslim man cannot marry a Muslim woman, although Muslim men frequently marry non-Muslim women. A non-Muslim may not inherit from a Muslim even within the same family. In judicial proceedings, a Christian's testimony against a Muslim cannot be accepted (infidels may not testify against believers).

TODAY THERE are over six million Copts in Egypt, although the official census recognizes only 2,315,360. They are drafted into the armed forces in disproportionately high numbers. Yet few are officers and the military and police colleges restrict Christian admission to a tiny fraction.

Under Sadat, only two cabinet ministers out of fifty-five were Copts, only two of Egypt's one-hundred ambassadors were Copts, and there were no Copts in positions as provincial governors or municipal executives until the one Coptic general was designated governor of Sinai on its return to Egyptian administration. Christians are forbidden admission to medical college departments of gynecology and obstetrics, and the government has always refused to allow the establishment of a Christian university.

The Egyptian press repeatedly views all Christians as in-

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fidels who should be isolated or converted. The Copts have no control over any segment of the mass media, and writings in opposition to their treatment are refused publication.

One of very few outspoken Copts is Milad Hanna, a professor of architecture at Cairo University and an active campaigner for an Egypt bound together by national, rather than religious, patriotism. Hanna published a book entitled *Copts, Yes but Egyptians* which underlined many of the community's grievances. He notes the discrimination against Copts in politics. Copts are not allowed to form political parties and are barred from holding high offices in existing ones. The Wafd party in which many Copts were members was banned by President Sadat only two months after he had authorized its reestablishment in 1978. Professor Hanna asserted that Christians have been completely deprived of any role in national or provincial politics. Furthermore, he adds, under Nasser the Muslim courts were abolished and the powers of the Islamic University of Al Ahzar were curbed. However, Sadat used the full weight of Islamic law to oppress the Copts.

The events of the last three years have borne evidence of Coptic dissatisfaction. Riots between Muslims and Christians erupted in April, 1980 in Alexandria, the seat of the Coptic pope, and in Upper Egypt, where many Copts live. On May 14 1980, Sadat accused Pope Shuenouda III and members of the Coptic clergy of involvement in a plot to partition the country and establish a Christian state based in Assyut. A special parliamentary committee of both Christian and Muslim M.P.'s was convened to investigate the riots and allegations of conspiracy. However, their findings were inconclusive.

Then in June 1981, Cairo's impoverished Zawia El Hamra district was torn with bloody clashes in which fourteen people died and scores of others were injured. The riots began when a Copt and a Muslim quarreled over a piece of land on which the Copts had planned to build a church and also on which Muslims had made a point of having informal prayers and religious meetings. When news of the quarrel spread, Muslim toughs ran through the streets burning and looting shops. The police responded slowly, but eventually moved in with tear gas and armored cars, seized seventy-seven firearms, and arrested two-hundred rioters. President Sadat criticized the police for delaying and blamed "Communist" agitators for the disturbances, ignoring the fact that his own policies had allowed the Muslim Brotherhood to turn Cairo's slums into ripe recruiting grounds.

Fearing the rise of religious factionalism, Sadat deposed Pope Shuenouda on 5 September 1981. Two days later, the Egyptian government announced that it would gradually take over forty-thousand mosques, allow only approved clerics to conduct services, and prevent political statements from appearing in sermons. By the end of the week, 1,536 Muslim clerics, Coptic priests, journalists, politicians, lawyers, and professors were in prison. But finally the fanaticism that Sadat himself had helped to foster overcame the president and Anwar El Sadat was assassinated by Muslim extremists on October 6, 1981. Sadat's successor, Hosni Mubarak has tried to calm the situation without altering the second-class status of the Copts.

CORRECTION: The author of the poem "Brides of El Salvador" in our Dec. 17, 1982 issue is Leonard Moran, not Leo. Our apologies to the author.

OVER ONE-THOUSAND miles south of Alexandria is Ethiopia, where the largest number of Copts live. Today about forty percent of the Ethiopian population are Copts. Originally, the archbishop or Abun of the Ethiopian church was appointed in Alexandria and was never an Ethiopian citizen. In 1950, Emperor Haile Selassie fulfilled one of his lifelong ambitions and changed the system, allowing for the election of an Ethiopian Abun. Since then all Abuns have been Ethiopians and links with Alexandria have weakened. Under the Ethiopian emperors, Coptic Christianity was a powerful, conservative, and sometimes oppressive, force in national life. Little did anyone expect the situation to change.

However, in 1974 Haile Selassie was dethroned following strikes, student demonstrations, and finally an army mutiny. A junta under Haile Mariam Mengistu announced the beginning of a national revolution and sixty former officials were executed. Successful land reform was instituted and a one-party state was established. Opposition was brutally repressed, and the influence of the Coptic church was curtailed, in spite of the fact that Mengistu and most leading members of the junta were naftagna or Coptic colonists who had settled in Oromo lands.

In January 1979, thirteen new bishops were installed after their predecessors were compelled to retire. Of the retired bishops, four were reportedly imprisoned and one murdered. A campaign known as the "Red Terror" began early in 1977 with the arrest and imprisonment of thousands of intellectual, professional, and Christian dissenters (thirty-thousand at its peak in March 1978). Amnesty International reported cases of torture and of dark, crowded, unhealthy prisons. Their report claimed that in the Addis Ababa area alone the "Red Terror" claimed five-thousand lives. A large majority of the executed were secondary school and university students.

Amnesty International, the Swedish Foreign Ministry, the World Council of Churches, and other religious bodies called on the Mengistu government to respect its citizens' human rights, but to no avail. The governor of the southern province of Gemu Gofa was reported to have said that the revolution could not be fully successful unless Christianity was annihilated. In their report of March 2, 1979, the WCC stated that in certain areas there had been "serious action" — including torture, imprisonment without trial, church closures, and the compulsory registration of Christians. The same document concluded that there was no evidence of systematic persecution of Ethiopian Christians. Exactly what the WCC considers systematic persecution beggars the imagination.

Other Christian groups and the Falashas or Ethiopian Jews have also suffered, particularly in Eritrea. Five percent of the Ethiopian population belong to other Christian churches, with the Catholics, Pentecostals, and Lutherans predominating. Pastor Gudina Tumsa, secretary-general of the Mekane Yesus (Lutheran) church has been repeatedly detained and ques-

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tioned by the police. In one instance, one hundred and seventy Mekane Yesus members were detained with him. Other church groups have experienced similar actions, and the 1982 anti-guerrilla drive in Eritrea was also accompanied by governmental attempts to break the back of all Christian groups throughout the entire country.

BETWEEN EGYPT and Ethiopia lies Africa's largest nation, the Sudan. There are about one-hundred thousand Copts in the Sudan, served by twenty churches and two bishops. (This is in addition to three hundred thousand Catholics converted by missionaries from Italy.) The Copts appear to be a respected and contented entrepreneurial group, even though Islam is the state religion and socialism is the government's goal. However, the attitudes of the youth are changing, and the ugly signs of destabilizing fanaticism are beginning to show.

Troubles in Ethiopia have caused a tremendous influx of refugees into the eastern provinces of the Sudan. A large portion of these exiles are Christians, and this is seen as another source of potential instability. Some refugees have been settled in other countries, particularly Italy and the United States, but the Sudan still bears the greatest burden.

The regime of Jaafar Mohammed Nimeiry has in the past supported Eritrean separatist movements, but talks between Nimeiry and Mengistu throughout 1980 normalized relations between the two countries. Despite assurances from the Sudanese government, many refugees feel that a sell-out is in store for them. However, Nimeiry's point of view can be easily understood; not only is the Sudan surrounded by eight neighbors in varying degrees of instability, but the Sudan has had problems of religion in the past on numerous occasions.

For most of the 1960s, the three southern Sudanese provinces were beset with guerrilla warfare between the Arab-Muslim-dominated central government and the pagan and Christian southern tribes. When Nimeiry seized power in a 1969 coup, he promised to end the fighting. Later he expelled Soviet advisors and instituted a system of federal government. Fighting died down, agreements were made, and developmental schemes were instituted. However, the nation is now burdened with a heavy foreign debt, a faltering economy, and serious external problems. One can only compliment the Sudanese on the respect for human rights they have shown in recent years. Nevertheless, prudence dictates that the tolerance of a poor nation should not be tested too far.

For the twenty million Christians of Egypt, Ethiopia, and the Sudan, a crisis is at hand. The Coptic church has been badly shaken by events in Egypt and Ethiopia, and Christians throughout the region are in need of a center free of government interference and social antagonism. Muslim/Christian tolerance is reaching new lows in northeast Africa, and a peaceful solution seems very remote. Although human rights organizations are carefully watching this troubled area, greater action is sorely needed to insure peace and freedom for the believers of all religions in northeast Africa.

Peter Green
Christ in Our Perplexity

the light's been gouged from every sky
of the way pitching the days in our eyes
and ears like wet earth through a screen

and the dog we're given for guide, old Ghost,
blind and deaf and hacked at the knees
cowers in us whimpering piteously.

LeRoy Smith, Jr.
Adam Rational

In a dark thicket
Of the ultimate night,
We face ourselves and see nothing,
Having imagined
Both reality and truth
And perhaps even God,
Who imagined us;
But this, the ultimate night,
We did not imagine
And may therefore hope.

Charles Haddox
Nativity of Mary

Rose born amid our
Human
Winter like a breath
That turned to a lighter
Color the hard –
Packed marl in
Our hearts
Who
Through quiet
Brought forth our
Dayspring/greensprig
Shine
Glassy winter to softness

Lawrence Joseph
Abba

Scarred fingers, shoulder
muscles sore
from hacking cleaver down spine to get at
what's inside. "Death
don't ever come easy," my Abba says,
prying dried blood and sawdust
from under fingernails
with the blade of a boning knife.

Peter Green
A Quiet Day Reading

The sun bumps gently down
behind a small bare tree
closing round trunk and branch
like fingers round a wrist.
The tree sinks into the sun.

I take this coin, this dole,
like the head of Thomas More,
like Peter's run for the tomb,
in love and loss and longing for
the blazing face of the whole.

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Screen

GANDHI CLOAKED

THE NAKED MAN WOULDN'T DO

I ALWAYS GET nervous when someone traveling on a Columbia Pictures expense account tells me that a holy man changed his life. When Ben Kingsley told me that playing the title role in *Gandhi* had had this effect on him, we were sitting in his suite at the Regency on Park Ave. (Perhaps in his former life, before playing Gandhi, he used to stay in cheaper hotels.) On the couch between us sat two Columbia publicity people whose heads turned silently from him to me and back again as if watching a match at Wimbledon. Kingsley said that when the call came — that is, the phone call from Richard Attenborough — he happened to be reading a biography of Gandhi and "had been praying in my heart of hearts to do a film." Asked to do a screen test, as were other candidates for the role, Kingsley got no further than make-up. After he had donned the rubber skull cap, mustache, dhoti and shawl of the old Gandhi, Attenborough came into the dressing room, looked at him for a few minutes, and offered him the part.

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Kingsley didn't sound as if he was surprised, so I asked whether he was. He answered that he was struck with "how remarkable the whole pattern was," as if he had been destined to play the role.

Kingsley is himself an Indian, though he has long passed for white on the English stage. As I mentioned in my previous column, he changed his name from Krishna Ranji to Ben Kingsley so he wouldn't be typecast in ethnic roles. I'm not sure that this background destines one to play Gandhi. Nor do I think that Attenborough was in a better position to appreciate the Mahatma's life. Sir Richard got his start in films forty years ago in Noel Coward's *In Which We Serve,* and *Gandhi* suggests that he is serving still.

I was also discussing in my previous column the assassination scene with which *Gandhi* both begins and ends. The first time we watch the scene, we see Gandhi shot but can't hear his final words as he falls. The second time, the screen goes black as the bullets hit, and we *only* hear what he says: "Oh, God. God." The implication is that by the end we have gotten inside Gandhi, that we are now hearing the inner voice to which he has been listening. It must at least be said that this movie is in the mainstream of Western thinking about the Mahatma. Getting inside Gandhi has become something of an obsession with us. He is a mystery we have to solve. Doing so has become a cottage industry in the West, like spinning in India.

Since psychoanalysis is a key specially fitted to hidden truths, Gandhi made, from a Western point of view, the perfect subject for a biography by Erik Erikson. My own guess is that we are fooling ourselves with such books. Gandhi is a man who simplified his character the way he simplified his wardrobe, until he was almost naked. What we can't understand about him, or accept, is that what you saw was what you got. This it was that made him exceptional, perhaps even unique among modern men. He had no ulterior motives. He had released all suppressed desire, which flew up out of his body like birds set free from a cage. He had clarified himself until he was transparent. As this movie shows, however, we continue to fret over him, trying to find a solution to what is already plain.

To have gotten inside Gandhi is not the only implication that the assassination scene at the end has. Another is that everything we have seen from the beginning has been destined to happen. Any movie that begins at the conclusion of its story, and returns to the same scene at the end, closes a circle of fate around its characters. In this context, Gandhi is presented as someone whose ability was not so much to shape events as to foretell them. A crucial scene according to Kingsley — one of the "hinge points of history," he called it — is when Gandhi is summoned to a meeting with the Viceroy of India (John Mills). "You don't think we're just going to walk away from India, do you?" the Viceroy splutters. "Yes," Gandhi replies with the calm of someone able to see the handwriting on the wall, "You will just walk out."

I think that Gandhi had, if not foresight, at least a great deal of insight into the British. Whether he had a universal message for mankind I can't say. But his success as a political leader

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was tied to a very specific time and place. The film reminds us of this in an almost incidental scene where journalist Margaret Bourke-White (Candice Bergen) asks Gandhi how he would deal with the Nazis. The answer, of course, is that he couldn't have. He couldn't even deal with India once independence came. His historical gift was for but one adversary, the British, whom he understood because he had first adopted and then transcended their values. He may well have known what they would do before they themselves did, as this film suggests.

Nevertheless, the film gives me the feeling that the person I am getting inside of is Attenborough, not Gandhi. Attenborough is the one with the sense of destiny, and he imposes that sense on Gandhi's story in a way that finally diminishes Gandhi's real achievement in life. Having first conceived of this movie in the early 1960s, Attenborough has worked on the project ever since. (Like Kingsley, he was reading a biography of the Mahatma when the call came, from his own inner voices.) Attenborough practically made the movie into what India was for its subject, a holy mission. Yet somewhere along the line he seems to have lost sight of Gandhi himself.

Before we even get to the intermission, Gandhi is already about as saintly as he can get. There's nowhere new for the role to go, so it becomes static, a mere rehearsal of the Gandhian postures and gestures at which Kingsley is an expert. The fact is that the film's hero has been something of a non-person all along. Attenborough has been preoccupied elsewhere, with the sweep of history. Gandhi's life is a kind of standpoint around which the director has organized the endless succession of crowd scenes that make up his film. To conceive of history as a continuous pageant like this obscures its complexity. The film implies that the simple man who is its subject was able to make his mark because history itself is simple-minded. At the same time that the film is spiritualizing and immortalizing Gandhi, it is also giving him less than his due as a real man who lived at a particular historical moment.

There is a passage in *Gandhi's Truth* where Erik Erikson, in the course of discussing a memoir by a nineteenth-century governor of Madras, speaks of the English as "being able to do harm with *such* articulate and civilized self-criticism." Attenborough's movie is in that tradition. He's doing penance for British colonialism; yet he's every bit as dazzled by the Raj as his forebears were. Part of the appeal India has for him is the same that it had for English merchants two-hundred years ago — cheap labor. He couldn't have re-created Gandhi's funeral with 300,000 extras at Pinewood Studio, as he did in Delhi's Pajpath where the actual funeral procession was held. This is the largest crowd scene in movie history. The possibility of staging a spectacle like this was irresistible. It was, I suspect, what really lured Attenborough to India. He gave the *Gandhi* project twenty years of his life. In the resulting movie he has replicated the Empire with the same indomitable energy that built it in the first place. *Gandhi* is the movie the British deserve about India, just as *Apocalypse Now* was the one we deserved about Vietnam.

COLIN L. WESTERBECK, JR.

(The second of two parts)

A PARADOX OF HIS EARLY LIFE

Gandhi as military recruiter

MARTIN GREEN

RICHARD ATTENBOROUGH'S film about Gandhi shows us his career from outside, which makes it seem a triumphant progress, morally speaking. It begins with his first (apparent) encounter with racial prejudice in South Africa, and we see him distinguish himself from other Indians simply by his stubborn courage. He does what they would do if they dared — what we would do. The film takes no interest in Gandhi's radically different sense of values and self-formation; no interest in the other political and moral ideas around. It puts Gandhi and non-violence in the spotlight, and sees everything else in dark contrast — whether cowardly compromise or ugly racism.

Thus Gandhiism begins on its manifest destiny, and any shocks and pauses it suffers seem the result of external opposition or betrayal. But in fact Gandhi's tactics and even his beliefs varied strikingly, even in matters so basic to his movement as his teaching of non-violence. There were times when he considered redefining that concept, to include what the rest of us would call violence.

This fluctuation, and others, earned him suspicion and contempt from his political rivals, but, properly understood, it should make him more understandable and likable to us. Gandhi was — as he often said — an experimental mind, who brought together quite heterogeneous beliefs, and was ready to try almost any tactic. That is why he changed his creed from "God is Truth" to "Truth is God"; he could not describe God or prescribe his teaching; the only revelation was existential. Probably the crucial experience of Gandhi's life, after his original calling, was the frontier experience he got in South Africa, far from the old rigidities of India, and the new pomps of England. There his immediate circle contained intellectual Jews, engaged in life-experiment, and his general environment was people who were beginning again and proud of new energies.

It is a weakness in the film that it reduces the complex South African situa-

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tion to the single issue of anti-Indian prejudice, eliminating that circle of intellectual Jews, Gandhi's *Robinson Crusoe* enthusiasm (he himself names that book) for simplifying his life, and the native population, so much worse treated than the Indians. The film had of course to simplify; but this simplification reduces the painful and complicated interest of Gandhi's triumph to a sentimental liberal-saint's legend — which means that it will be taken less seriously.

When Gandhi arrived back in India, in January 1915, one of the things he did was to introduce Western styles and action and Western traits of character into Indian politics. He was not the first or the only politician to do this — one could point to both the parliamentarians like Bipin Chandra Pal, and the revolutionaries like the Indian Communist party. But the traits Gandhi embodied were peculiarly proper to, and cooriginal with, Western ideology. Lloyd and Suzanne Rudolph have pointed out in their book, *The Modernity of Tradition*, how much of Benjamin Franklin's morality is reflected in Gandhi's.

Gandhi brought to India the work ethic and its interest in economy of time and effort. Like Franklin, he went over his accounts daily, and was determined that nothing should be thrown away. Erik Erikson makes a similar point, saying that Gandhi tried to erect a bulwark, based on punctuality, responsibility and factuality, in the flux of Indian life, which is characterized by fluid movements of fusion and separation.

The film (using mainly British actors) wisely concentrates upon the British figures in Gandhi's story, especially after the scene shifts to India. The only Indian who is given much attention is Nehru, the most anglicized of them all, and there is no attempt to trace in him the dialectic of Indian versus English elements. That is hardly surprising, when it pays no attention to that dialectic in Gandhi himself.

PUBLIC CLEANLINESS was another modern value as important to Gandhi as to Westerners, and with the same Protestant resonance. In his writings he associates the need to cleanse particularly with temples, because of their combination of gold (and jewels) with filth (and blood). He hated all confusions of the spiritual with the animal, the sacred with the sacrilegious — everything Tantric. His cleanliness symbolized a zeal to keep those things separate, to exalt the one and debase the other; this was a very Western and Protestant zeal; modern Orientalists show the exact opposite.

At the same time, of course, Gandhi was determined to use these Western virtues against the West itself; believed that the West had taken a fundamentally wrong turning, and in that sense he *was* an Orientalist. (This sense of gleeful paradox is not imported into Gandhi's thinking; he himself, though serious, was a playful thinker.) We see that paradoxical character — though it quickly became the reverse of playful — in this matter of his attitude toward violence.

This came to a head in 1918, when he began recruiting in his native province on behalf of the British army. He had himself before then volunteered to serve in the war (as a non-combatant); and in South Africa he had organized Indians into hospital units to help the British in the Boer war; he believed he owed support to the army which defended him.

But this time he was persuading men to fight as soldiers. He had asked the government to make him its chief recruiting agent on April 30, 1918. He set himself the goal of getting twenty men from each of the six hundred villages in Kheda, a part of his native Gujarat. This was work which no Indian nationalist had touched, and for which there was no national constituency. There were 800,000 Indians in the army, but they came from areas and social groups which had nothing to do with Congress, the center of nationalist politics. The recruiting work was always done by British agents, and among the "martial races."

Gandhi had to say the things the British said — to complain, for instance, that though 400,000 men from the Punjab joined the army during the Great War, only seventy of them came from among the ten thousand university students. He had to praise martial loyalty and valor and to blame the educated middle class — those who agitated for Home Rule for India — because they refused to defend their country or to respect those who did. And the work involved him in endless explanations of how he reconciled this work with his opposition to violence. No wonder he wrote to his friend Dr. Mehta on July 2: "You must be watching my work of recruitment. Of all my activities, I regard this as the most difficult and the most important. If I succeed in it, genuine swaraj [self-rule] is assured."

One of his arguments was partnership: if Indians wanted to have the benefits of being treated as equals in the Empire, they must take a part in its defense comparable with the part the English took. He himself had twice volunteered for service in this war, once in France and once in Mesopotamia; because, however passively, he was accepting the military protection of the Empire. He also said, as in Nadiad on June 17, that swaraj without military power would be useless, and joining the army was the way for Indians to learn military skills.

Another way in which Gandhi defended his consistency was by saying that military training was appropriate for those who did not believe in satyagraha [non-violent resistance]. "That the whole of India will ever accept satyagraha is beyond my imagination."

Thus he had one message for one section of his audience, the peace-makers, and another for the war-makers. This was politically realistic but morally confusing, for it left his listeners free to assign themselves to their section, or to invent a new one. But Gandhi spoke to all of them.

It is one of Gandhi's most striking characteristics that, while identifying himself as a man of a special type, an abnormal and extreme phenomenon, he addressed the whole range of human types and invoked the criteria of cultural

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normality in doing so, the criteria of reason and tradition and culture. Most importantly, he was concerned about men of violence, and wanted to define their place in society, and their virtues.

"There can be no partnership," he said, "between the cat and the mouse, between the ant and the elephant." But this meant that the mouse and the ant must change, as well as the cat and the elephant. He had a strong sense, which he frankly admitted, that he and those like him *were* mice and ants.

> Any stout fellow can successfully intimidate us. If a Pathan were to come here and start hitting out with the lathi, we would all run away. An overbearing Kabuli, entering a compartment already crowded, will get the people to vacate the seats . . . and occupy the room for four.

He often, in this period, said that he was ceasing to be a Bania (the merchant caste into which he was born) and becoming a Kshattriya (the warrior caste.) "Satyagraha is a soldierly instinct, and Banias are largely associated with money-making rather than with fighting for a cause. Hence I have the fewest co-workers from among fellow-Banias." His movement's prime aim is self-purification, or the revival of the Kshattriya spirit, he says. And perhaps his most striking formulation of the idea occurs in a letter to his English friend, Andrews: "You cannot teach ahimsa to a man who cannot kill."

THIS IDEA involved Gandhi in debate and doubt of himself, much more than did his ideas of sex, for on this issue he was strongly drawn in opposite directions. In *Young India* on October 20, 1921 we find:

> . . . the sooner we are left free to fight, the better for our manhood, our respective religions, and our country. It will not be a new phenomenon if we fought ourselves into sanity. The English carried on internecine warfare for twenty-one years before they settled down to peaceful work. The French fought among themselves with a savage ferocity hardly excelled during modern times. The Americans did nothing better before they evolved their commonwealth. Let us not hug our unmanliness for fear of fighting among ourselves.

This is an example of Gandhi citing the lessons of history, which he usually repudiated. It is also an example of why he had finally to repudiate them; the lessons of history are not in accord with the gospel of peace. He had a clear enough formula, that a man must be capable of violent resistance before he was capable of non-violence. But it involved him in many difficult questions of application which tormented him in the summer of 1918.

> It is clear that, before I can give a child an idea of moksha, I must let it grow into full manhood. I must allow it to a certain extent to be even attached to the body . . . What is the meaning of having a vigorous body? How far should India have to go in for a training in armsbearing?

On the July 17, 1918 he wrote to Hanumantrao, one of his disciples, at the ashram:

> I do believe that we shall have to teach our children the art of self-defense. I see more and more clearly that we shall be unfit for swaraj for generations to come if we do not regain the power of self-defense. This means for me a rearrangement of so many ideas about self-development and India's development.

Twelve days later he wrote to Mashruwala (another ashramite):

> In what manner should the children learn to use their strength? It is a difficult thing to teach them to defend themselves and yet not be overbearing. Till now, we used to teach them not to fight back if anyone beat them. Can we go on doing so now? What will be the effect of such teaching on a child? Will he, in his youth, be a forgiving or a timid man? My powers of thinking fail me. Use yours. This new aspect of non-violence which has revealed itself to me has enmeshed me in no end of problems . . . Shall we teach our boys to return two blows for one, or tolerate a blow from anyone weaker than themselves but to fight back, should a stronger one attack them? What should one do if assaulted by a Government official? . . . One cannot climb the Himalayas in a straight line. Can it be that, in like fashion, the path of non-violence, too, is difficult?

On the same day he wrote to Andrews:

> I must indulge myself again. I begin to perceive a deep meaning behind the Japanese reluctance to listen to the message of a Prophet from a defeated nation. [Tagore had gone to Japan, preaching pacifism, and had been coolly received.] War will always be with us. There seems to be no possibility of the whole human nature becoming transformed. Moksha and ahimsa are for individuals to attain. Full practice of ahimsa is inconsistent with possession of wealth, land, or rearing of children.

He reflects on the ignominy of Indian history and the need for vitality in the future. At the Battle of Plassey (where Clive and a small English army defeated a vastly larger number of Indians)

> . . . we were a cowardly mob . . . And so we have remained more or less — more rather than less—up to today . . .

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the rishis of old stipulated that their religious practices were to be protected by the Kshattriyas . . . Total disregard of death in a Mohammedan lad is a wonderful possession.

As two last examples of his power of imaginative projection at this time, we might take a letter of July 22, 1918, to Punjabhai: "What we have taken as dharma [duty] is not dharma. We commit violence on a large scale in the name of non-violence. Fearing to shed blood, we torment people every day and dry up their blood. A Bania can never practice non-violence." And three days later he wrote to Maganlal Gandhi, about Vaish-nava dharma (the sense of duty or righteousness cultivated by the followers of Vishnu, the cult to which his family belonged). He said that Swami Shajanand (1781-1833, founder of a Vaishnava sect), and Vallabhacharaya (who spread Vaish-nava devotion in Gujarat) had robbed Vaishnavis of their manliness, because the kind of love they taught was sentimentality. Non-violence comes into play mainly in men's relations with each other, and these two teachers gave no hint of that.

I have come to see, what I did not so clearly before, that there is non-violence in violence. This is the big change which had come about. I had not fully realized the duty of restraining a drunkard from doing evil, of killing a dog in agony or one infected with rabies. In all these instances, violence is in fact non-violence. Violence is a function of the body. Brahmacharya consists in refraining from sexual indulgence, but we do not bring up our children to be impotent Non-violence was taught by a Kshattriya to a Kshattriya. [Buddha and Mahavir.]

Raendra Prasad tells us in his *Autobiography* that Gandhi was full of indecision and self-doubt after his recruiting campaign, and often wept and said, "I do not know what God's will is." It does not seem, moreover, that Gandhi ever resolved the problem. He fell ill, nearly died, and when he recovered engaged in the nationalist agitation which won him the national leadership. His activity, from then on, always had an insecure foundation in theory.

But theory was not, of course, what he had built his life on. Truth was his God, the Truth he discovered only in action here and now. And in some ways this internal debate shows us Gandhi at his most impressive. It shows his imaginative flexibility and willingness to imagine points of view and modes of being quite unlike his own. It shows his experimental interest in venturing out into behavior that may get him into trouble, and may puzzle and annoy his natural allies. And it shows that sometimes this flexibility and experimentalism led Gandhi into irreconcilable self-conflict. In all these traits Gandhi can remind us of an artist — say Tolstoy. If we are sometimes struck by the gulf of differences that separate Gandhi from his great precursor and mentor, this is one of the times when we see them as profoundly alike.

Books: LESSON IN AMERICAN HUBRIS

THE IMPERIOUS ECONOMY

David P. Calleo

Harvard University, $17.95, 265 pp.

Howard Rosen & Alexander Kaplen

CHARLES DE GAULLE wrote in his memoirs, "The United States, delighting in her resources, feeling that she had within herself insufficient scope for her energies, wishing to help those who were in misery or bondage the world over, yielded in turn to that taste for intervention in which the instinct for domination cloaked itself." According to David P. Calleo, General de Gaulle had a point. In *The Imperious Economy*, Professor Calleo contends that the United States has adopted Europe both as a cherished protectorate and a prop for its own inflated economy, imposing a monetary and military hegemony that incites growing European resentment and pushes the American economy further into deficit, inflation, and recession.

Only the United States emerged from the Second World War stronger than when it had entered. Had it chosen to spend several years and large chunks of its resources, it could have expelled the Soviet army from central Europe and forced former allies and enemies to remain economically and politically subservient to American interests. But the Truman administration chose another tack. It promoted European recovery to thwart Soviet expansion. It ushered in the Marshall Plan to finance an economic resurgence that would stymie the Communist party in western Europe; the Truman Doctrine to arm governments threatened by anti-democratic insurgents; and NATO, a temporary alliance in which the United States would contribute the lion's share of security, so that European nations could revitalize their economies without being burdened by defense costs.

Professor Calleo contends, however, that the last two decades of American foreign and economic policy have attempted to undermine the European autonomy that had been Truman's primary postwar goal. This trend began with the Kennedy administration. Believing that President Eisenhower had translated American hopes for a European renaissance into an excuse for inaction, President Kennedy embraced a program of deficit spending and global leadership. At home, he cut taxes in order to spur industrial growth toward full employment. Abroad, he promoted more military expenditures, new foreign assistance programs, intervention in Cuba and Vietnam, and international tariff reductions that would open Europe to American grain exports.

Though the immediate economic consequences were beneficial, Mr. Calleo

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suggests that this neo-Keynesian paradise proved ephemeral. As Kennedy's boldness metamorphosed into Johnson's will for power, so began almost two decades of budgetary extravagance and economic instability. First came the Vietnam War and the Great Society, expensive programs that produced American deficits, international inflation, and European indignation. Then, attempting to remedy the stagflation he had inherited, President Nixon restructured the international monetary system. With John Connally as his hatchetman, he extricated the United States from the global currency agreements it had estabished in 1944 at Bretton Woods. Suspending the dollar's convertibility and imposing a ten percent import surcharge were first steps in a campaign to end fixed rates of exchange, to devalue the dollar, and to gain a trading advantage that Kennedy's tariff reductions had been unable to achieve.

But Nixonian neo-mercantilism brought only temporary success. "With its goals of European recovery, superpower detente, and Third World development," Mr. Calleo reasons, "American world leadership had encouraged the very evolution that led to its relative decline." By the end of the seventies, the United States no longer had the power to induce Europeans to accept the inflation they felt Americans had foisted upon them. International monetary manipulation was no longer available to the United States as a temporary fix for a bloated economy.

Nor should monetary policy ever have been used as such. Viewing the last twenty years as "an age of economic gimcrackery, in which [American] governments have trifled with . . . inflation." Professor Calleo writes, "[T]he notion that the proper monetary policies could control inflation . . . suggests a political program considerably beyond the intellectual and moral scope of monetary analysis." Inflation will end only when its budgetary sources stop feeding it.

President Reagan took office determined to control government spending—and equally determined to restore America's world primacy. But these goals proved contradictory, as they had for every administration since Kennedy's. For one thing, the president refused to consider that the United States, long after the recovery of western Europe and Japan, still spends a much larger percentage of its GNP on defense than do its allies. For another, he ignored the fact that the United States spends much less on social programs than all of its allies except Japan, where private corporations provide elaborate health plans and pensions. It is not social welfare that needs cutting; it is defense.

Professor Calleo argues that the Reagan administration should bring foreign responsibilities into harmony with American resources. A partial American withdrawal from NATO, he believes, would help to extricate the United States from its budgetary morass. Last year the United Stastes contributed $81.1 billion to the Atlantic Alliance—more than half the American defense budget and more than the Europeans spent to defend themselves. This is an ironic statistic, considering that Europeans have long bemoaned American hegemony, and just as long refused to pay a greater share of their defense costs. By withdrawing six of its ten divisions from Europe, the United States would save $30 billion annually within three years, reducing the American deficits that Europeans contend cause global stagflation.

Professor Calleo's proposal, of course, has critics. Neo-conservatives like Irving Kristol, with memories of European appeasement as remote as Rapallo and Munich and as fresh as the latest grain embargo, foresee America's allies refusing to rearm and going the way of Finland. Liberals who want the United States to renounce the first use of nuclear weapons in Europe fear that a reduction of America's conventional troops would increase its reliance on a nuclear strategy.

In response, Mr. Calleo implies that American troop reductions would prod the nations of western Europe to become the autonomous allies envisoned by President Truman. The European allies, after all, stare directly at Russian guns; as democracies, they presumably possess even less taste for Soviet hegemony than they do for the American variety. It is reasonable, then, to expect that Soviet proximity would persuade the Europeans to take up the slack: if not to replace American troops, then to pay for their presence, just as West Germany reimburses the United Kingdom for a part of its Continental brigade.

Mr. Calleo's commentary is impressive. The author integrates history, statistics, and economic theory into a near-seamless analysis of the contradictions between the hegemonic impulses of the last twenty years and America's original intentions for postwar Europe. He achieves an extraordinary synthesis, while developing his historical account so subtly that it rarely reads as the moralistic lesson in American hubris which it ultimately is.

The question remains, however, whether the Reagan administration is willing to make any military reduction in Europe. With Alexander Haig at the State Department, there was obviously no chance; he used to be the Commander of NATO. Even after his departure, it

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seems unlikely that the president, as spooked as he is by the Russians, will consider the notion. But the pressures of ever-widening deficits have a logic of their own. And the Democrats are looking for an issue to use in 1984.

An ethnic's journey

HUNGER OF MEMORY
THE EDUCATION OF
RICHARD RODRIGUEZ
Richard Rodriguez
Godine, $13.95, 196 pp.

Louise A.N. Kerr

RICH-HEARD Road-ree-guess is the phonetic English pronunciation of Richard Rodriguez (nació Ricardo Rodriguez) who has written an ironic, dispassionate exposition of "the life of a middle-class man." American education is the central theme of the autobiography, language its primary symbol: language as the conduit for sharing private and intimate thoughts and feelings; language as the means of entering public spheres of power and participation; language as the tool for an education which should enable people to distinguish between and keep separate those private and public spheres.

Having started school as a monolingual Spanish-speaker, Rodriguez recalls that he remained silent in his English-speaking Catholic grammar school until, under direction of the nuns, his parents banished Spanish from their home for the sake of their children, thereafter using it only furtively between themselves. Apparently an unusually thoughtful child, Rodriguez cites this as the moment of his intellectual birth—partly because it freed him forever from the possibility of sharing intimacies with his family for which an exact English equivalence could not be found. He feels that retaining Spanish, even as a second language, would have retarded his mental growth and makes no conjecture about how such retention might have expanded it. In retrospect, he finds the school's mandate justifiable, perhaps essential.

> *Mistaken, the gullible reader will – in sympathy or in anger – take it that I intend to model my life as the typical Hispanic-American life.*
>
> *But I write of one life only. My own. If my story is true, I trust it will resonate with significance for other lives. Finally, my history deserves public notice as no more than this: a parable for the life of its reader. Here is the life of a middle-class man.* —Richard Rodriguez
> *Hunger of Memory*

Disclaiming the universality of his experience because of differences between him and more disadvantaged Mexican-Americans, he nonetheless uses it as evidence for what he thinks are fallacies in "bi-lingual" and "affirmative action" programs. We are told that he was accepted at Stanford on his own academic merits, studied journalism at Columbia, then went to Berkeley for graduate work in English Renaissance Literature only to discover in the early 1970s that he was sought after for prestigious jobs at Ivy League universities because of his "skin color," not because of his professional qualifications. While he had taken advantage of many "minority student programs," in the end he became squeamish and, out of principle, rejected all offers. In interviews promoting the book he has been widely quoted as believing that skin color should not be a cause for discrimination, but neither should it be used for favored treatment. We are never told how many of his professors were women, black, or Hispanic (middle-class or otherwise), and therefore perhaps we do not need to be told how many of them were white men chosen, no doubt, only for their abilities. We are told, however, that his view is the one most appropriate to the "middle-class status" he worked so hard to achieve.

Having overcome the feelings of inadequacy that his dark skin caused him as a child, he can describe with some humor the many home remedies he tried to lighten his color—including an attempt to shave off the offending epidermis. Now, that "bronze skin," he says, is thought to be a product of Swiss or Caribbean vacations, a fashionable match for the well-fitted, expensive Italian clothes he wears to cocktail parties in London, New York, and Los Angeles.

He describes himself as a writer driven to reveal his innermost thoughts, even those thoughts which his family has explicitly asked him to keep "private." In this he follows a long tradition. He spent five years polishing this manuscript, working sporadically at various un-named, short-term jobs provided by the many "rich white friends" he has been "fortunate" enough to mingle with since his grammar school days in Sacramento and his college days at those prestigious universities.

Rodriguez's journey has been a long and painful one. On the way he has become monolingual, accommodated himself to the separation of his "private" familial world and his "public" worlds, and rejected affirmative action on grounds of public policy as well as personal principle. By his own testimony he has become acceptable to the majority society.

The book concludes with a description of one of the now rare occasions that he sees his family, a Christmas celebration at which his cocktail party training lets him be witty, voluble, and charming. He tells us of the silver champagne bucket he and his siblings gave their working-class parents and reveals a distance far greater than that between San Francisco, where he lives, and Sacramento. As everyone leaves, his mother asks him to take a jacket to his father.

> I take it to my father and place it on him. In that instant I feel the thinness of his arms. He turns. He asks if I am

HOWARD ROSEN, *a New Jersey lawyer, was a member of the U.S. delegation to the 34th session of the U.N. General Assembly.*
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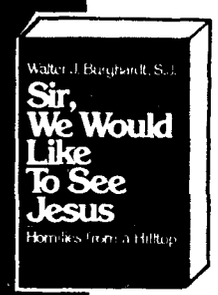

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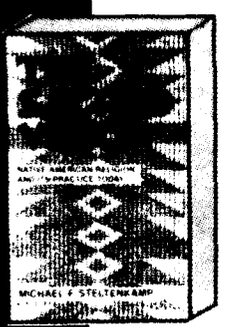

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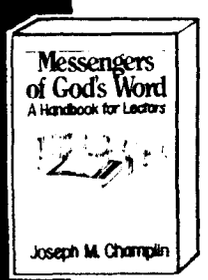

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going home now too. It is, I realize, the only thing he has said to me all evening.

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A river voyage

THE CHURCH OF THE POOR DEVIL

John S. Dunne

Macmillan, $14.95, 155 pp.

Pheme Perkins

THE TITLE is taken from the popular name of a chapel of St. Anthony in the Amazon river town of Manaus. It had been built during the rubber boom by the mistress of a local cabaret owner, who called himself "the poor devil" even as his business thrived on the boom town economy. The local imagination tied the chapel to rites of the devil, though the woman involved took the author on a nocturnal visit to a model of the chapel in which saints' statues were said to correspond to African gods. It is also the location for an annual festival with all the color of popular religion. Dunne came upon the chapel at the end of a river voyage in which he had seen the power of human life to cut across the barriers of class and poverty that separated those below deck and the still poorer people in the huts along the river from those in the cabins. Though the chapel went unmentioned in his journal, he was drawn back to it two years later, at the time of the festival. It had become a compelling symbol for his journey in passing over from personal religion to the religion of the poor.

Those accustomed to pleading the "option for the poor" in liberation theology with its underpinnings of critical theory, social science, and Marxist hermeneutic will find the interiorized subjectivism of the book disquieting. Dunne does not deny the awful, dehumanizing

Christianity is . . . the sign that expresses the true longing of the oppressed creature, I mean the heart that can change a heartless world, the soul that can free us from soulless conditions. It does not change the things of life; it changes our relationship to the things; and so it changes our relationship with one another.

—John S. Dunne
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effects of poverty and oppression. He acknowledges Marx's "cry of the oppressed" and the even more terrifying river journey into the evil of the human heart in Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*. But he refuses to accept the ultimacy of their account.

Dunne argues that the religion of the poor also speaks with a genuine voice (not illusion as Marx thought). That voice is rooted in the "heart's longing" and speaks of a human essence which emerges when the structures of oppressive social relations are broken. Without it we would not see their oppressive character. Cordolina's chapel expresses the heart's longing in its three essentials: (1) it is a labor of love; (2) it is an expression of relationship with God; (3) it is on a human scale. In order to touch the "heart's longing," one must move beyond the complexity of "meeting needs" to the simplicity which seeks one thing, the will of God.

Such "consciousness-raising" reveals the truth behind Marx's slogan, "from each according to his abilities to each according to his needs" in the process of passing over. Willingness to share the journey of the poor, to give according to one's ability, also requires one to receive according to the needs that are laid bare by that journey through suffering, fear, death, and the struggle for emergence, for recognition. Dunne also hints that a journey from the religion of the poor to personal religion may be necessary from those on the other side. They may move from immersion in the "things of life" and the common joys and sorrows to a sense of having a real relationship with things and thus a personal life.

Religion of the poor thus embodies a duality: the cry of oppression and the signs of hope rooted in our common "heart's longing." That longing, in turn, only finds coherence in the duality of a vulnerable God, one who can be confessed as present in all the evil and suffering of the world. Dunne suggests that personal religion has a difficult time perceiving that truth about God, since it creates a self which stands over against "my fate," suffering — let alone over against that of others. He suggests that we are incapable of love unless we can move beyond fulfillment of our needs, "beyond the pleasure principle," to a sense of the suffering of all humanity and to a relation with others that is based on willingness to share suffering.

The interiority and subjectivity of Dunne's model of understanding by passing over and returning to ourselves, still seems a bit thin when confronted with the massive socio-economic relations that support world poverty. It is easy to read this book as the self-indulgence of personal religion in its own subjectivity. Yet, its criticism of the Marxist vision of human liberation and its defense of our common humanity deserves attention. Dunne rightly insists that we cannot discover the light beyond the "heart of darkness" unless we have a vision of humanity's relation to God that goes beyond the calculation of needs and their satisfaction.

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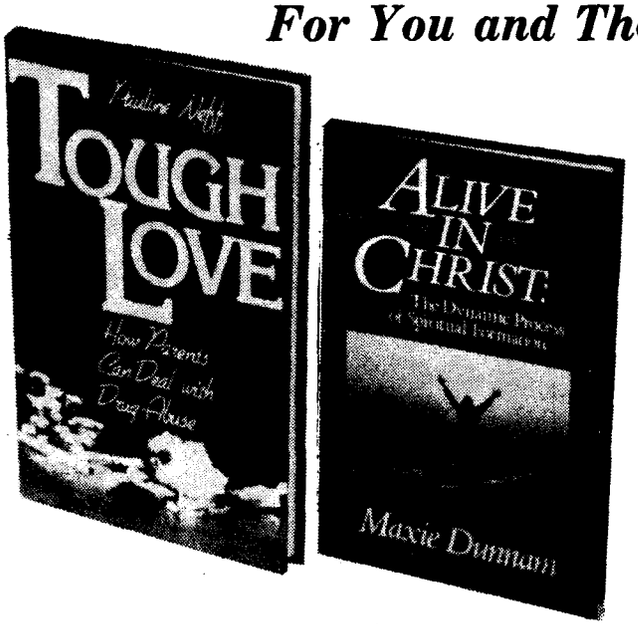

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